The families of Valley Beth Shalom
wish you strength and comfort in the embrace of loved ones,
in the support of community, and in the wisdom of your tradition.
May God comfort you along with
all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.
Jewish Traditions of Mourning ................................. 1-2
Poems and Meditations ......................................... 3-8; 20-24
Afternoon Service - Mincha Service ..................... 17-19; 25-37
Mourners’ Kaddish ............................................... 39-40
Evening Service - Ma’ariv Service ....................... 16-19; 25-37
El Malay Rachamim ............................................... 41
Havdallah ............................................................. 43
Additional Readings.............................................. 38; 40; 42; 44-53

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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**JEWISH TRADITIONS OF MOURNING**

Fear not death, for we are all destined to die. We share it with all who ever lived and all who ever will. Cry for the dead, hide not your grief, do not restrain your mourning. But remember that endless sorrow is worse than death. When the dead are at rest, let their memory rest, and be consoled when a soul departs.

—The Wisdom of Ben Sirach

We, the families of Valley Beth Shalom, extend our deepest feelings to you on the loss of your loved one. We understand that your world has been torn and your faith shaken. At this difficult moment, we offer you this booklet of prayers and reflections. We hope that these words — ancient and modern — provide wisdom, hope, strength and meaning. Around you stands a synagogue community of compassion and care. Please call upon us if we can be of help.

The traditions of Jewish mourning reflect two moral principles: *K’vod Ha-met*, honoring the deceased, and *Nichum Avayleem*, comforting the mourner. The careful preparation of the body for burial, the maintenance of the body’s dignity in a closed casket, the funeral service and the eulogy retelling the story of the individual’s life — all these traditions express our respect for the deceased. The compassion of friends, family and community at the cemetery and at the home express our desire to share strength and love with the mourner.

Following the funeral service, the family returns to their home for “Shiva,” which means “seven.” For seven days (the day of the funeral counts as the first day, and the seventh day concludes in the morning,) the mourners remain at home. On the Shabbat, they may attend synagogue service. They
are to be treated not as hosts but as guests in their own home. Compassionate friends, family and community visit bringing warmth, strength and comfort. A service is held in the home. The purpose of Shiva is to provide a retreat from the obligations of business and social life, so that the mourner may move through the feelings of numbness, pain and loneliness at home, without having to “make an appearance” or “put on a good face.” Traditionally, mirrors are covered in the house during Shiva so that the mourners need not worry about how they look to others. All they need do is feel their feelings as they slowly regain a sense of life's worth and meaning. The Jewish tradition sets out a scheme of gradual, unrushed transitions in the mourning process.

The balance of the 30-day period from the funeral which remains after the conclusion of Shiva is a period called “Shlosheem” “thirty.” Although the mourner returns to work after the end of Shiva, he or she should not participate in celebrations and other festive events for the duration of Shlosheem. Shlosheem provides psychological room for the mourner’s continuing feelings of loss and grief. For those mourning a spouse, a brother or sister, or a child, the Mourners' Kaddish is recited at the burial service, during Shiva, and during Shlosheem. For those mourning a parent, Kaddish is recited for 11 months following the death. Kaddish must be recited in the presence of a minyan — a quorum of ten Jews — as a way of bringing the mourner back into contact with the community.

These customs represent the accumulated wisdom of the Jewish tradition. They provide light in the darkness of the mourner’s world and a way for friends and family to help bring the mourner home from the graveside back to the world of meaning and joy.

The last word has not been spoken the last sentence has not been written the final verdict is not in

It's never too late to change my mind my direction to say hō to the past and ŋeš to the future to offer remorse to ask and give forgiveness

It is never too late to start all over again to feel again to love again to hope again

It is never too late to overcome despair to turn sorrow into resolve and pain into purpose

It is never too late to alter my world not by magic incantations or manipulations of the cards or deciphering the stars

But by opening myself to curative forces buried within to hidden energies the powers in my interior self.

In sickness and in dying, it is never too late Living, I teach Dying, I teach how to face pain and fear

Others observe me, children, adults, students of life and death Learn from my bearing, my posture, my philosophy.

It is never too late— Some word of mine, some touch, some caress may be remembered Some gesture may play a role beyond the last movement of my head and hand.

Write it on my epitaph that my loved ones be consoled It is never too late.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Hold on and let go—
On the surface of things, contradictory counsel.
But one does not negate the other.
The two are complementary, two sides of one coin.

Hold on — for death is not the final word.
The grave is not oblivion. Hold on — kaddish, yahrzeit, yizkor.
No gesture, no kindness, no smile evaporates.
Every embrace has an afterlife
In our minds, our hearts, our hands.

Hold on — and let go.
Sever the fringes of the tallit and
The knots which bind us to the past.
Free the enslaving memory which sells the future
to the past.
Free the fetters of memory which turn us passive,
listless, resigned.
Release us for new life.

Lower the casket, the closure meant
To open again the world of new possibilities.
Return the dust to the earth,
Not to bury hope but to resurrect the will to live.

We who remember are artists, aerialists
On a swinging trapeze
Letting go one ring to catch another.
Hold on and let go—
A subtle duality which endows our life
With meaning, neither denying the past
Nor foreclosing the future.

We are part of the flow of life,
The divine process which gives and takes,
creates and retains.

We, too, must give and take, seize hold, and release.
The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh.
Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

**Help Me Pray**

Lord of the Universe, Master of Prayer,
Open Your lips within me, for I cannot speak.

Send me words to help me shape Your praise,
To bring peace and blessing to my days.

Too often the world has stifled
All words of blessing within me.

So much has threatened to break my spirit.

Help me, Lord, for I have been so very low,
And You heal the broken in spirit with joy.

In Your compassion, in Your boundless love,
Give me words of prayer; then accept them from me.

May my words, Your words, be sweet and whole before You
As the words of King David, sweet singer of psalms.

I am so often weary, empty, dry.
In thirst, in hunger, I seek comfort, even joy.

Transform my sorrow, Lord.
Help me to renew my faith, my hopes,
As I raise my soul toward You.

Open Your lips within me, Lord,
That I may speak Your praises.

—Adopted from Nachman of Bratzlav
No one knows my grief,
Treasures my private memory.
I mourn alone.

The grief is my own.
Of my flesh and bone
I mourn alone.

Yet I mourn in the midst of my people,
In the minyan of mourning
With others who cry and remember
Their own loss.

Alone together;
An individual in community,
Present to each other;
We are each other’s comfort.

Alone together
We are each other’s consolation.
Alone we are mortal, together immortal
A community does not die.

The kaddish requires community.
A kaddish must be answered.
A kaddish calls for response.
Together we answer: Yehay shmay raba m’vorach.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Closer to the grave
the nearness changes us.
Do we think we will live forever?

Speech, acts, gestures
that once enraged seem foolish now.

Before the images of shrouds,
envies, jealousies,
sworn vindictiveness
all shrink into nonsense.

Before the shovel of dirt,
the sound of pebbles on the casket,
the angers and gnawing regrets
are strangely petty.

How did the Rabbis put it?
At the end of time, when the Evil Impulse will be slain,
people will look at its corpse and wonder
that this small hill seemed so hard to climb,
that this impulse as thin as a hair was
so difficult to conquer.

Awareness of death may bring courage to live.
Knowing our mortality,
how dare we be afraid?
Before whom, and of what afraid?
Before what choices do we tremble?
What questions are we afraid to ask?
What doubts will we not seize with both hands?

The wise counseled
that each of us should live as if this day
were our last.
And if it were, each breath would be deeper,
each step would be firmer,
each dream would be bolder.
Standing in the shadow of death,
a brave new light shines.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Life And Death

What is left to be done after the dying is over? After the earth has covered the grave, the casket lowered, the ribbon cut, the last kaddish recited, the farewells over, the closure formed?

But there is no final closure in death. Life and death are locked in embrace. So intimately intertwined that the “Kree-a” of the cloth cannot tear them apart. Something important remains intact.

When the dying is over, a different kind of memory takes over. Not the memory that is obituary. Not the memory that records the past indiscriminately, but an active memory that sifts through the ashes of the past to retrieve isolated moments, and that gives heart to the future. That memory is an act of resurrection.

It raises up from oblivion the glories of forgotten years. Even the memories of failure, the recollections of frustration and regret, are precious. Broken memories are like the tablets Moses shattered, placed lovingly in the holy Ark of remembrance. Memories are saved -- those immaterial, disembodied ghosts that endure.

What is left after death? Pointers, ensigns, marking places that raise us up to life and give us a changed heart, perhaps a life lived differently, better, wiser, stronger than before. What is left after death? The life of the survivor.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

The Evening (Ma’ariv) Service is recited after nightfall. As the shadows on the earth lengthen, we accept the night but recall that there is a dawn to follow. The tradition urges us to remember the light in the midst of the darkness.

ברכּ בַּעֲלָה קָנָה לְעַלְּלָם יָדוֹ.
Barchu et Adonai ham-vo-rach
Praise the Lord, Source of blessing.

ברכּ בַּעֲלָה קָנָה לְעַלְּלָם יָדוֹ ל’וֹלָם וָאֶד.
Baruch Adonai ham-vo-rach l’olam va-ed
Praise God, Source of blessing, throughout all time.

Ayl chai v’ka-yam, tameed yeem-loch alaynu
L’olam va-ed, Baruch ata Adonai, ha-ma-areev ar-aveem.
Praised are You, Lord our God, whose Presence fills the Universe, and whose word brings on the evening dusk. You open the gates of dawn with wisdom, moving the days with understanding, set the order of seasons and arrange the stars in the sky according to Your will. You create day and night, rolling light away from darkness and darkness away from light. Eternal God, may Your rule embrace us forever. Praised are You, Lord, for the evening dusk.

You faithfully love Your people Israel, teaching us Torah and mitzvot, statutes and laws. Therefore, Lord our God, when we lie down to sleep and when we rise, we shall reflect upon Your law, always rejoicing in Your Torah and mitzvot. For they are our life and the length of our days. Day and night, we will meditate on them. Never remove Your love from us. Praised are You, Lord, who loves the people Israel.

—Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Imprint these words of Mine upon your heart. Bind them as a sign upon your hand, and let them be a reminder above your eyes. Teach them to your children. Repeat them at home and away, morning and night. Inscribe them upon the doorposts of your homes and upon your gates. Then your days and the days of your children on the land which the Lord swore to give to your ancestors will endure as the days of the heavens over the earth.

—Deuteronomy 11:13-21
When God’s children beheld God’s might they sang in praise of God, accepting God’s sovereignty. Moses and the people Israel sang with great joy to the Lord:

"Who is like you, Lord, among all that is worshipped? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, working wonders?"

Adonai yeemloch l’olam vaed.

Your children beheld Your sovereignty as You divided the sea before Moses. "This is my God," they responded, declaring:

The Lord shall reign throughout all time.

And thus it is written: "The Lord has rescued Jacob; God redeemed him from those more powerful." Praised are You, Lord, Redeemer of Israel.

OPEN THE GATES

"Open the Gates of Righteousness for me." (Psalm 118:9)

At the Time of Judgment in the World to Come, everyone will be asked: “What was your occupation?”

If the person answers, “I used to feed the hungry,”
They will say to him, “This is God’s gate, you who fed the hungry, may enter” ... “I used to clothe the naked,”
They will say to him, “This is God’s gate, you who clothed the naked, may enter”...

and similarly with those who raised orphans,
and those who performed the Mitzvah of Tzedaka,
and those who performed acts of caring loving-kindness.”

—Midrash Tehilim

U’sh’mor tzay-taynu u’vo-ay-nu l’chaim ul’shalom, may-ata v’ad olam,Ufros alaynu sukkat shalom-echa. Baruch ata Adonai, shomer amo yisrael l’ad.

Help us, O God, to lie down in peace; and awaken us to life again. Spread over us Your shelter of peace. Guide us with Your wisdom. Shield us from enemies and pestilence, from starvation, sword and sorrow. Remove the evil that surrounds us, shelter us in the shadow of Your wings. You, O God, guard us and care for us. For You are the Source of grace and lovingkindness. Guard our comings and our goings, grant us life and peace, now and always. Praised are You, Lord, eternal guardian of the people Israel.

PEACE

This we know:

Fear can yield to faith, hope can reignite
Rage can cease, hatred can be melted. . . .
Merciful One, illumine the sight of your children
To see You in each other’s eyes.
Merciful One, spread the canopy of your peace over us,
Over all who dwell on earth.

O God, Source of Life, Creator of Peace. . .
Help Your children, anguished and confused,
To understand the futility of hatred and violence
And grant them the ability to stretch across
All their boundaries and division

So they may confront horror and fear
By continuing together
In the search for justice, peace and truth. . . .
With every fiber of our being
We beg You, O God,
To help us not to fail nor falter.
The Afternoon (Mincha) Service may be recited any time during the afternoon until sunset. The rabbis observed Mincha takes place in the midst of the turmoil of our activities and that one should, if but for a few moments, remove oneself from the pressures of the marketplace in order to recall who we are as children of a loving God. The Mincha Service begins here, with Ashrei (page 15), and continues with Chatze Kaddish (page 17), Amidah (page 25), Kaddish Shalem (page 35), Aleinu (page 36) and the Mourners’ Kaddish (page 29).

Ashrei
Ashrei ישב בчная, והד ילולו מקהל
Ashrei קום strpos, אשורי חמה שֶני אלוהים
תהלת לדוד,
ארֵנַבֵא אַלּוֹּהֵי הָמָךְ, וְאֵבְּרַכְּךָ שֶמוֹ קָלָוֹת:
בכל ימ אֵבְּרַכְּךָ, ואֵלֶּלֶּה שֶמוֹ קָלָוֹת יְדוּד.
יְדוּד יי מֶחלֶל מַאָז, יְלָדוּתָה יָאָו הַחֵר;
ימֶלֶל יי יְשָבְעַת, סְבָדְתֵךְ מַזִּигְדִיה.
הָדָר בּוֹדֶד הַחֵד, וְדַבֵּר נְפָלָתִיךְ אֶשֶּׁכֵּחַ;
עָהַוּ נְפָלָתִיךְ יָאוּרֵי נְפָלָתָךְ אֱסֵפְּרַה;
אֵכָר כְּכַבְּבֶכָּ בִּיָּשָע, יֵצְבֵּקְךָ לְנוֹר.

Praised is the Lord by day and praised by night, praised when we lie down and praised when we rise up. In Your hands are the souls of the living and the dead, the life of every creature, the breath of all flesh. Into Your hand I entrust my spirit; You will redeem me, Lord, God of truth. Our God in heaven, assert the unity of Your rule; affirm Your sovereignty, and reign over us forever.

May our eyes behold, our hearts rejoice, and our souls be glad in Your sure deliverance, when it shall be said to Zion: Your God rules. The Lord rules, the Lord has ruled, the Lord shall rule throughout all time. All sovereignty is Yours; unto all eternity only You reign in glory, only You rule. Praised are You, Lord and glorious Ruler. May you rule over us and over all creation.
Hallowed and enhanced may God be throughout the world of creation. May Your sovereignty soon be accepted, during our lifetime and the life of all Israel. And let us say: Amen.

May God be praised throughout all time.

Glorified and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, acclaimed and honored, extolled and exalted may the Holy One be, praised beyond all song and psalm, beyond all tributes which mortals can utter. And let us say: Amen.
In the rising of the sun and in its going down
We remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter
We remember them.

In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring,
We remember them,

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,
We remember them.

In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn,
We remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends,
We remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength,
We remember them.

When we have joys we yearn and share,
So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us
As we remember them.

—Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Reimer

We have seen Yitzhak Perlman
Who walks the stage with braces on both legs,
On two crutches.

He takes his seat, unhinages the clasps on his legs,
Tucking one leg back, extending the other,
Laying down his crutches, placing the violin under his chin.

On one occasion one of his violin strings broke.
The audience grew silent but the violinist did not leave the stage.
He signalled the maestro, and the orchestra began its part.
The violinist played with power and intensity on only three strings.

With three strings, he modulated, changed and
Recomposed the piece in his head
He re-tuned the strings to get different sounds,
Turned them upward and downward.

The audience screamed with delight,
Appauded their appreciation.
 Asked later how he had accomplished this feat,
The violinist answered
It is my task to make music with what remains.

A legacy mightier than a concert.
Make music with what remains.
Complete the song left for us to sing,
Transcend the loss,
Play it out with heart, soul and might
With all remaining strength within us.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Let not the last hours eclipse the entire life.
Let not the pain, the forgetfulness, the suffering negate the joy, the memory, the exaltation of life.

Nothing decent, nothing noble, no gesture of love, no smile of encouragement is swallowed up by death.

In memory there is a resurrection of the life of the spirit.
Memory is our hold on the past, our solace in the present, our hope for the future.

Memory has a life of its own, an afterlife, a transfusion of meaning from one life to others.

The beloved who gave you life passed on to you a miraculous spark.
May it illumine your path and brighten your way.

Honor those recalled with your life.
Immortalize them with your undying spirit.
Sanctify their memory by sanctifying the world with the blessings of Godliness.

They are loved by their children and loved by children’s children.
One generation flows into another. The river remains eternal.

— Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Our ancestors worshiped You. Abraham and Sarah, Rebecca and Isaac, Jacob, Rachel and Leah, stood in awe before You. We too reach for You, infinite, awesome, and transcendent God—source of all being—whose truth shines through our ancestors’ lives. We, their distant descendants, draw strength from their lives and from Your redeeming love. Be our help and our shield, as You were theirs. We praise You, God, Guardian of our ancestors.

Your power sustains the universe. You breathe life into dead matter. With compassion, You care for all that lives. Your limitless love lets life triumph over death, heals the sick, upholds the exhausted, frees the enslaved, keeps faith even with the dead. Who is like You, God of splendor and power incomparable? You govern both life and death, Your presence brings our souls to blossom. We praise You, God who wrests life from death.

Help us to find our way to Your truth again, to obey You with trusting faith, to attain wholeness in Your Presence. We praise You, God who is always ready to help us start anew.

Forgive our failures with a parent’s love, overlook our shortcomings with regal generosity, for You are gentle and gracious. We praise You, God of mercy and forgiveness.

See our suffering, sustain us in our struggles, save us soon. We praise You, God, our people’s hope of redemption.

Heal us, O God, and keep us in health. Help us, that we might help ourselves. Send true healing for all our pains, for You are the source of healing and compassion. We praise You, God from whom all healing comes.

Bless this year for us with prosperity. May the wealth of the earth and the rhythms of the seasons yield us a good harvest in abundance. We praise You, God whose blessings are as certain as the seasons.

Let freedom resound like a mighty ram’s horn. Let our spirits soar, sustained by Your promise. May all Your scattered people find wholeness and renewal. We praise You, God who brings home the lost and the lonely.
May our ancient sense of justice be renewed, our classic sources of wisdom rediscovered. May sorrow vanish from our midst. May Your tenderness and pity, justice and compassion govern our lives always. We praise You, God of kindness and justice.

May malice abate and ill will perish; may hatred cease and arrogance wither. We praise You, God whose power helps good triumph over evil.

For the loving and the righteous, for the learned and the wise, for us and our loved ones, may Your mercy appear and Your justice be made manifest. May we be counted among the good, may we never regret having trusted in You. We praise you, God, strength of the just, root of our confidence.

May my tongue be innocent of malice and my lips free of guile. In the presence of adversity, teach me to calm my soul and remain truly humble to all. Open my heart with Your teachings, that I may be guided by You. Hear my words and help me, God, because You are compassionate, because You are almighty, because You are holy, because You are loving, because You reveal Your Torah. May You find delight in the words of my mouth and in the emotions of my heart, God, my strength and my salvation. As You maintain harmony in the heavens, give peace to us and to the Jewish people, and to all humanity. Amen.

—Rabbi Jules Harlow

Prayers That No One Can Write for Me

There are prayers that no one can write for me
Tears that no one can shed for me
Judgements that no one can render for me.
In the silent Amidah, we turn to the inner recesses of our being, confront that which we hide from ourselves, discover the muted inner voice and open the lips that have been sealed from praise.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Open my mouth, O Lord, and my lips will proclaim Your praise.

Praised are You, Lord our God and God of our ancestors, God of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebecca, and of Jacob and Leah, great, mighty, awesome, exalted God who bestows lovingkindness, Creator of all. You remember the pious deeds of our ancestors and You promise redemption for their children because of Your love.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur:
Remember us that we may live, Ruler who delights in life.
Inscribe us in the Book of Life, for Your sake, living God.

You are the Ruler who helps and saves and shields. Praised are You, Lord, Shield of Abraham and Sarah.

Your power, O Lord, is boundless. You are author of life and of death, and in You, death is conquered by life.

From Sh’meeenee Atzeret to Pesach:
You cause the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

Your lovingkindness sustains the living, You transform death into life. You support the falling, heal the sick, free the bound. You keep Your faith with those who sleep in the dust. Whose power can compare with Yours? You are the Lord of life and death and deliverance.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur: Whose mercy can compare with Yours, merciful Lord? In mercy You remember Your creatures with life.

Faithfully, You vanquish death with life. Praised are You, Lord, Source of life and death.

Holy are You and holy is Your name. Holy are those who praise You daily. Praised are You, Lord, holy God.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur: Praised are You, Lord, Holy Ruler.
KEDUSHA

Recited During Mincha Only

We proclaim Your holiness on earth as it is proclaimed in heaven above. We sing the words of heavenly voices as recorded in Your prophet’s vision:

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts, the whole world is filled with God’s glory.

Heavenly voices respond with praise: Praised is the glory of the Lord throughout the universe. And in Your holy psalms it is written: The Lord shall reign through all generations; Your God, Zion, shall reign forever. Hallelujah. We declare Your greatness through all generations, allow Your holiness to all eternity. Your praise will never leave our lips, for You are God and Ruler, great and holy. Praised are You, Lord, holy God.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur: Praised are You, Lord, Holy Ruler.

On other evenings:

You graciously endow mortals with intelligence, teaching us wisdom and understanding. Grant us knowledge, discernment, and wisdom. Praised are You, Lord who graciously grants intelligence.

At the conclusion of Shabbat or a Festival:

You graciously granted us knowledge of Your Torah, teaching us to fulfill the laws You have willed. You set apart the sacred from the profane, even as You separated light from darkness, singled out the people of Israel from among the nations and distinguished Shabbat from all other days. Avinu Malkenu, may the coming days bring us peace. May they be free of sin and cleansed of wrongdoing; may they find us more closely attached to You. Grant us intelligence.

Our Father, bring us back to your Torah. Our King, draw us near to Your service. Lead us back to You, truly repentant. Praised are You, Lord who welcomes repentance.

Forgive us, loving God, for we have sinned; pardon us, for we have transgressed. You forgive and pardon. Praised are You, gracious and forgiving Lord.

Behold our affliction and deliver us. Redeem us soon because of Your mercy, for You are the mighty Redeemer. Praised are You, Lord, Redeemer of the people Israel.

Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed. Help us and save us, for You are our glory. Grant perfect healing for all our afflictions. For You are the faithful and merciful God of healing. Praised are You, Lord, Healer of Your people Israel.

Lord our God, make this a blessed year. May its varied produce bring us happiness. Grant (in summer): blessing (in winter): dew and rain upon the earth, satisfy us with its abundance, and bless our year as the best of years. Praised are You, Lord who blesses the years.
Sound the great shofar to herald our freedom, raise high the banner to gather all exiles. Gather the dispersed from the ends of the earth. Praised are You, Lord who gathers our dispersed.

Restore our judges as in days of old, restore our counselors as in former times. Remove from us sorrow and anguish. Reign alone over us with lovingkindness; with justice and mercy sustain our cause. Praised are You, Lord, Ruler who loves justice.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur:

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur:

Praised are You, Lord, Ruler of judgment.

Frustrate the hopes of those who malign us; let all evil very soon disappear. Let all Your enemies soon be destroyed. May You quickly uproot and crush the arrogant; may You subdue and humble them in our time. Praised are You, Lord who humbles the arrogant.

Let Your tender mercy be stirred for the righteous, the pious, and the leaders of Israel, devoted scholars and faithful proselytes. Be merciful to us. Reward all who trust in You, cast our lot with those who are faithful to You. May we never come to despair, for our trust is in You. Praised are You, Lord who sustains the righteous.

Have mercy, Lord, and return to Jerusalem, Your city. May Your Presence dwell there as You have promised. Build it now, in our days and for all time. Reestablish there the majesty of David, Your servant. Praised are You, Lord who builds Jerusalem. Bring to flower the shoot of Your servant David. Hasten the advent of Messianic redemption. Each and every day we hope for Your deliverance. Praised are You, Lord who assures our deliverance.

Lord our God, hear our voice. Have compassion upon us, pity us, accept our prayer with loving favor. You listen to entreaty and prayer. Do not turn us away unanswered, our Ruler, for You mercifully heed Your people’s supplication. Praised are You, Lord who hears prayer.
ON ROSH HODESH — Our God and God of our ancestors, show us Your care and concern. Remember our ancestors; recall Your anointed, descended from David Your servant. Protect Jerusalem, Your holy city, and exalt all Your people, Israel, with life and well-being, contentment and peace on the Rosh Hodesh day.

Grant us life and blessing, and remember us for good. Recall Your promise of mercy and redemption. Be merciful to us and save us, for we place our hope in You, loving and merciful God.

May we witness Your merciful return to Zion. Praised are You Adonai, who restores the Divine Presence to Zion.

We proclaim that You are Adonai our God and God of our ancestors throughout all time. You are the Rock of our lives, the Shield of our salvation in every generation. We thank you and praise You for our lives that are in Your hand, for our souls that are in Your charge, for Your miracles that daily attend us, and for Your wonders and gifts that accompany us, evening, morning, and noon. You are good, Your mercy everlasting; You are compassionate, Your kindness nerverending. We have always placed our hope in You.

A Prayer When a Parent Dies

I miss you. You gave me my life. You were my protector, my teacher, my moral compass, my comfort. I feel so alone without you. No one worries about me the way you did. No one loves me the way you did.

Please forgive me for the times I caused you pain, and for the times I took you for granted. I can’t begin to fathom all the sacrifices you made for my sake.

I want to thank you for all the ways you blessed my life. Nothing can replace the gaping hole your death has left in my life. But mixed together with all my sadness, there is a great joy for having known you.

I will remember your smile, your touch. I will remember your laughter, your kindness, your generosity, your determination, your love.

Thank you for the time we shared, for the love you gave, for the wisdom you spread. I will always treasure the lessons you taught me. I will carry them with me all the days of my life. I am so proud to be your child.

May God watch over you and bless you, with gentleness and with love. As you blessed me. Rest in peace. Amen.

—Rabbi Naomi Levy

It is a Fearful thing to love
what death can touch.
A Fearful thing to love,
hope, dream: to be-

To be,
and oh! To lose.

A thing for fools, this
and a holy thing, a holy thing to love.

For your life has lived in me,
your laugh once lifted me,
your word was gift to me.

To remember this brings a painful joy.

‘Tis a human thing, love, a holy thing,
to love what death has touched.’

—Chaim Stern
Accept the prayer of Your people Israel as lovingly as it is offered. Restore worship to Your sanctuary. May the worship of Your people Israel always be acceptable to You.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur:
Inscribe all the people of Your covenant for a good life.
May every living creature thank You and praise You faithfully, our deliverance and our help. Praised are You, beneficent Lord to whom all praise is due.
Grant true and lasting peace to Your people Israel and to all who dwell on earth, for You are the supreme Sovereign of peace. May it please You to bless Your people Israel in every season and at all times with Your gift of peace.* Praised are You, Lord who blesses God's people Israel with peace.

Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur:
May we and the entire House of Israel be remembered and recorded in the book of life, blessing, sustenance, and peace. Praised are You, Lord, Source of peace.

My God, keep my tongue from evil, my lips from lies. Help me ignore those who slander me. Let me be humble before all. Open my heart to Your Torah, so that I may pursue Your mitzvot. Frustrate the designs of those who plot evil against me. Make nothing of their schemes. Do so because of Your compassion, Your power, Your holiness, and Your Torah. Answer my prayer for the deliverance of Your people. May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, my Rock and my Redeemer. May the One who brings peace to the universe bring peace to us and to all Israel. Amen.

**A Time to Live A Time to Die**

To everything there is a season,
And a time for every purpose under heaven.

A time to be born, and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to uproot;
A time to slay and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build up;
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to cry and a time to dance,
A time to throw stones and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace and a time for solitude,
A time to seek and a time to lose;
A time to keep and a time to discard,
A time to tear and a time to sew;
A time for silence and a time to speak.

—Ecclesiastes Chapter 3

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**KADDISH SHALEM**

ינפדו ליקיה שמה באה, בלאמה די ברך כרעה,
המילכית מכימเลี้ยง יביסימו ובאימה זכרה כל וחית.
ישכאל, בראלא ובאמה, קריב אמה אמן.

הא שמה באה מברך עלולו ועלולו עולם עולם.
Yeh-hay shmay raba mevarach, l’alam ul’almay al’maya, yeet-barach

יתבך וيشפכת, יתפראו והמוס והמוס איןחור
יתשעל ויתוכל שמה דודא ברי זא לוכל
ל XMLHttpRequest Yugoslavia מקול מך ברכתו והשכנתו.
יתבשתה והممאת, זאמידנו בלאמה, אאמר אמן.
ית téléchargו ובשילות כל (בית) ישראל קדש
אבודתי די ברשימו אامر אמן.

ואשתו שלמה באה מעימה והימים עלום ועלום
שראל, אאמר אמן.

עשה שלום בברוממי והא יעשה שלמה עלום ועלום
שראל, אامر אמן.

Oseh shalom beem-romav, hu ya-aseh shalom alaynu, v’al kol yisrael v’eamru amayn.
It is up to us to hallow Creation,
   to respond to Life with the fullness of our lives.
It is up to us to meet the World,
   to embrace the Whole even as we wrestle with its parts.
It is up to us to repair the World
   and to bind our lives to Truth.
Therefore we bend the knee
   and shake off the stiffness that keeps us from the subtle
   graces of Life and the supple gestures of Love.
With reverence and thanksgiving
   we accept our destiny and set for ourselves the task of redemption.

—Rabbi Rami Shapiro

## AND THEN ALL THAT HAS DIVIDED US WILL MERGE

And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another’s will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share in the Earth’s abundance
And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden again.

—Judy Chicago
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

God makes me lie down in green pastures; 
God leads me beside the still waters.

God restores my soul.
God guides me on the paths of righteousness for the sake of God's holy name.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death 
I will fear no evil, for You are with me.

Your rod and Your staff give me comfort.
You prepare a table for me in the face of my adversity; 
You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; 
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

When Kaddish is recited, we affirm our love of those so near and dear who have physically left us.

Our love, however, does not rest on physical survival; it is deeper than that.

When we love, we love the inner being of the beloved, the quality that makes for uniqueness, the spirit that creates personality and character.

That love does not ever disappear. It remains within us as long as we live.

With time we learn to handle the never-ending pain of loss, but that does not erode the affection and emotions we feel for the one who no longer moves about in our midst.

We know that whatever lives, must someday die. That, however, is true only of the material world. The spiritual can endure forever.

When we lose one who is dear, we mourn but we must not mourn excessively. We must be grateful for what we have had and find comfort in our memories.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
The Mourners’ Kaddish has no reference to death. It is a pathway to an affirmation life and the promise of tomorrow.

Hallowed and enhanced may God be throughout the world of creation. May Your sovereignty soon to be accepted, during our life and the life of all Israel. And let us say: Amen.

May God be praised throughout all time.

Glorified and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, acclaimed and honored, extolled and exalted may the Holy One be, praised beyond all song and psalm, beyond all tributes which mortals can utter. And let us say: Amen.

Let there be abundant peace from Heaven, with life’s goodness for us and for all the people Israel. And let us say: Amen.

May the Source of peace in the universe, bring peace to us and to all Israel. And let us say: Amen.

Loving God, who dwells on high, shelter the soul of our beloved beneath the wings of Your holy Presence. Protect this soul among all the holy and the pure whose shining light fills the firmament. Source of all life, bind this soul into the bonds of eternal life. Grant peace to this soul who has come home to You. And let us say, Amen.

An Unending Love

We are loved by an unending love. We are embraced by arms that find us even when we are hidden from ourselves.

We are touched by fingers that soothe us even when we are too proud for soothing.

We are counseled by voices that guide us even when we are too embittered to hear.

We are supported by hands that uplift us even in the midst of a fall.

We are urged on by eyes that meet us even when we are too weak for meeting.

We are loved by an unending love.

—Rabbi Rami Shapiro
Fear of Death

Fear-not of death or dying but of not having lived.
Fear-not of suffering but of suffering for no cause.
Fear-not of extinction of life but of having left no trace upon the earth.
Fear-not of finitude but of being forgotten.
Take heart—make this a life not lived in vain.
Take heart—make this a life not lived for naught.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Homecoming

If life is a pilgrimage, death is an arrival, a celebration.
The last word should be neither craving nor bitterness, but peace, gratitude.
Our greatest problem is not how to continue, but how to return.
The Psalmist asks: “How can I repay unto the Lord all His bountiful dealings with me?” When life is an answer, death is a homecoming.
This is the meaning of death: the ultimate self-dedication to the divine.
Death so understood will not be distorted by the craving for immortality, for this act of giving away is reciprocity on our part for God’s gift of life.

—Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

HAVDALLAH  

ברוך אתה, ברוך מלך העולמה, ברוך פּרַי הַגוֹפֵן.
Praised are You, Lord our God, whose presence fills the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

ברוך אתה, ברוך מלך הָעֵלָם, ברוך פּרַי הַגוֹפֵן, בּוֹרֵא מְמִית בֵּשָׁמֵים.
Praised are You, Lord our God, whose presence fills the universe, creator of fragrant spices.

ברוך אתה, ברוך מלך הָעֵלָם, ברוך פּרַי הַגוֹפֵן, בּוֹרֵא מְמִית הָאָשֶׁר.
Praised are You, Lord our God, whose presence fills the universe, creator of fire’s light.

ברוך אתה, ברוך מלך הָהָאָמָה הַמָּבְדֵּאֶל בֵּין קְדָשׁ לְכָל, בֵּין בֵּין הָשָׁבְעָה לְשֵׁשׁ מִלֵּי, בֵּין בֵּין הָאָשֶׁר לְשֵׁשׁ מִלֵּי: בּוֹרֵא אתָה, בּוֹרֵא מְמִית.
Praised are You, Lord our God, whose presence fills the universe, whose presence distinguishes the holy from the ordinary, light from darkness, Israel from the nations, the seventh day from the workweek. Praised are You, Lord, who distinguishes the holy.
Mourn me not with tears, ashes or sackcloth. 
Nor dwell in darkness, sadness or remorse. 
Remember that I love you, and wish for you a life of song. 
My immortality, if there be such for me, is not in tears, blame or self-recrimination. 
But in the joy you give to others, in raising the fallen 
and loosening the fetters of the bound. 
In your loyalty to God’s special children - the widow, the orphan, 
the poor, the stranger in your gates, the weak - I take pride. 

The fringes of the tallit placed on my body are torn, for the dead 
cannot praise You, O Lord. 
The dead have no mitzvot. 
But your tallit is whole and you are alive and alive you are called to mitzvot. 
You can choose, you can act, you can transform the world. 

My immortality is bound up with God’s eternity, with God’s justice, truth and righteousness. 
And that eternity is strengthened by your loyalty and your love. 
Honor me with laughter and with goodness. 
With these, the better part of me lives on beyond the grave. 

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

The young child asked, 
“Where is Grandma?” 
And the adult gasped, 
not knowing what to say. 

Not in the earth, 
buried, covered over with soil and small rocks. 
Not in the heavens, 
distant, far off, a fantasy of the imagination. 

Closer than earth, closer than heaven, 
Grandma, dear child, is within us all. 
In our memories of her kindness and goodness. 
Not faint echoes, but memories, resonate in us. 

Grandma is in our tenderness with each other, 
in our loyalty to family and friends, in our love of our people. 

Nothing noble dies with death. 
Warm embraces, wise counsel, celebrations of the spirit do not evaporate into the air. 

Grandma is not “where” but “when.” 
Whenever we gather together to celebrate festivals, 
whenever we offer help to the poor, the homeless, the sick, 
whenever we defend the innocent, raise our voice against injustice, 
Grandma’s influence is present. 

Grandma stood for noble purposes, 
Raised her voice against injustice. 
Grandma stood for ideas and ideals. 
Grandma stood for care and concern and comfort of the other. 

What she stood for, we now stand for; 
Even as we stand for the kaddish in her memory, 
in her honor, with our love. 

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
A woman of valor is treasured above rubies.
Her husband trusts her in his heart
For she does him only good every day of her life.

She brings food and clothing for her household,
Rising before dawn and working into the night to provide for them.

Her garden flourishes by her efforts and by her good judgment.
She girds herself with strength.
She stretches out her hands to the needy
With her gifts and deeds.
She honors her husband in his home
Like an elder of the land.

She clothes herself with strength and splendor
And faces the future with cheer.
She opens her mouth to speak wisdom,
To speak the teachings of kindness.

She manages her household and does not enjoy idleness.
Her children declare her happy and her husband praises her:
"Many women have done valiantly,
But you surpass them all."

Charm is false and
Beauty is fleeting.
But a woman who respects God will be praised.

Set before her the fruit of her hands, and
Let her deeds praise her.
—After Proverbs 31

When I die
If you need to weep
Cry for someone
Walking the street beside you.

And when you need me
Put your arms around others
And give them what you need to give me.

You can love me most by letting
Hands touch hands, and
Sons touch souls.

You can love me most by
Sharing your joys
Multiplying your good deeds.

You can love me most by
Letting me live in your eyes
And not in your mind.

And when you say Kaddish for me
Remember what our Torah teaches,
Love doesn’t die
People do.

So when all that’s left of me is love
Give me away.
—Merrit Malloy
Evening and morning, two worlds. 
This world and the next world, two worlds. 
Rabbi Hanoch once pondered, 

“What is the difference between us and the others?”

We and the other nations both believe that there are two worlds. 
They, too, say, “In the other world.”

The difference lies in this: 
They think that the two worlds are separate and severed. 
We profess that the two worlds are in their essence one, “and shall one day become one.”

How do they imagine these two worlds? For some
Vertically:
One world below, the other above. 
One world here and the other there.

For others two worlds
Horizontally. 
One stretch of time and place, 
Side by side one world alongside another. 
One time, one world entering into another. 
One world partially achieved, one world yet to be accomplished. 
One world actualized, and the same world to be realized. 
Both worlds are one, bound to each other 
memory and history was, is and ought to be. 
One world, yesterday, today and tomorrow, linked in yearning and work, Linked in dreams and effort, horizontally. 

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Envy
Those who stand bent before the casket 
weeping away their tears.

Envy memories of 
warm embraces, gentle humor, 
birthdays, anniversaries, 
joyous meals around the Sabbath table.

Pity those who cannot cry 
tears long 
dried into resignation, 
surrendering the promise.

Pity the dry-eyed sadness 
of those who can only dream of that 
which could have been, or should of been.

Pity those who regret what should have been said 
or left unspoken - 
loves lost, joys missed, 
hopes abandoned.

Pity memories in subjunctive moods - 
“if only he had, of only she had, if only I had.”

Envy the mourners 
who with sweet-bitter nostalgia 
slowly recite the Kaddish. 

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Do not come when I am dead
To sit beside a low green mound,
Or bring the first gay daffodils
Because I love them so,
For I shall not be there.
You cannot find me there.
I will look up at you from the eyes
Of little children;
I will meet you in the swaying boughs
Of bud-thrilled trees,
And caress you with the passionate sweep
Of storm-filled winds;
I will give you strength in your upward tread
Of everlasting hills.
I will cool your tired body in the flow
Of the limpid river;
I will warm your work-glorified hands through the glow
Of the winter fire;
I will soothe you into forgetfulness to the drop, drop
Of the rain on the roof;
I will speak to you out of the rhymes
Of the Masters;
I will dance with you in the lilt
Of the violin,
And make your heart leap with the bursting cadence
Of the organ;
I will flood your soul with the flaming radiance
Of the sunrise,
And bring you peace in the tender rose and gold
Of the after-sunset.
All these have made me happy; they are a part of me;
I shall become a part of them.

—Juanita De Long

Death is a mixture of moods,
Fear of abandonment, separation, being left alone,
brooding anger,
fists shaken against the sky,
voices shouted against the grave,
Regrets over things that could have been,
that should have been,
but that were not,
Bittersweet nostalgia,
ugly scenes transmuted into memories of mere mischief
Sharp quarrels softened by the passing of time,
words of stone smoothed by perspective,
tears, salt of self pity, brine of resentment
And remembrance of that gray day,
of a tear in the cloth, of a handful of earth,
and now this moment,
when together we cling to courage,
we who mourn
for others and for ourselves.
It is the dignity of the soul
to hold on to the past;
it is the dignity of the spirit
to take hold of the future,
to love and to forgive
others and ourselves,
to rise from grief,
to sew the torn garment,
to live, to love, even to laugh again,
and at the same time to remember —
always to remember,
always.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis
Where to Place the Broken Tablets

When Moses descended the mountain, the Tablets of the Law held firmly in his arms, he came upon the infidelity of his people, groveling before an image of gold. Disheartened, his grasp weakened and the Tablets fell from his hands.

What to do with the broken Tablets? What to do with the shattered words of God? Moses heard again a voice urging him to return to the mountain, to go up again to hew two tablets of stone like the first. He rose, girded his loins, ascended the mountain a second time to deliver a second revelation.

This time the revelation would not come with lightning, thunder and storms. This time there was collaboration between God and Moses, who carved into the stone upon which the finger of God inscribed Ten Words. The second revelation, the second Tablets of The Law, came after a deep disillusionment about the children of Israel. These Tablets came with a truer understanding of human reality. The people who will receive these laws are not perfect. While the ideal is powerful it must be tempered with the recognition of the imperfection of the human species.

What shall be done with the broken Tablets, with our failures, our stumblings, our errors?

Do not discard them, forget them or deny them. The shattered Tablets are real and within them lies the sanctity of truth. The broken Tablets are to be placed in the Ark of Holiness alongside the whole Tablets. They, too, belong there. For transgression and failure teach a sacred lesson. The sparks of sanctity lodge in what had once been profaned.

At night I rehearse the broken promises, the past filled with remorse and sorrow. I will not deny the brokenness. It reminds me of my imperfection, and from that I learn to hew a second set of laws. From my discontents with myself I engender the strength to repair my life.

—Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis

Exile

Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden. They lived together, east of Eden, tilling the earth and raising children, and struggling to stay alive. After the years of struggle, when their children were grown, they decided to see the world. They journeyed from one corner of the world to the other. In the course of their journeys, wandering from place to place, they found themselves standing before the entrance to the Garden of Eden, now guarded by an angel with a flaming sword. They were frightened and they began to flee when God spoke to them:

“Adam, you have lived in exile these many years. Your exile is finished. Return to the Garden.”

Suddenly the angel disappeared, and the way to the Garden opened.

“Come in, My children, welcome to Paradise!”

But Adam had grown wary these many years.

“Wait,” he replied, “It’s been so many years. Remind me, what it’s like in the Garden.”

“The Garden is paradise!” God responded. “In the Garden there is no work. You need never struggle or toil again. In the Garden there is no pain, no suffering. In the Garden there is no death. Day after day, life goes on for eternity. Come my children, return to the Garden!”

Adam listened to God’s words —no work, no struggle, no pain, no death. An endless life of ease. And then he turned and looked at Eve. He looked at the woman with whom he had struggled to make a life, to take bread from the earth, to raise children, to build a home. He thought of the tragedies they had overcome and they joys they cherished.

And Adam shook his head, “No, thank you, not now... Come on Eve, let’s go home.” And hand in hand, Adam and Eve turned their backs on Paradise and walked away.

—Rabbi Edward M. Feinstein
Edward M. Feinstein, Rabbi
Harold M. Schulweis [z”l], Rabbi
Joshua Hoffman, Rabbi
Noah Zvi Farkas, Rabbi
Avi Taff, Rabbi
Phil Baron, Cantor
Herschel Fox, Cantor
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