Temple Israel

DAILY MINYAN PRAYERS
The Power of Prayer

Each morning at the minyan service
   We pray you are hearing our plea
For all of us who are in need of healing
   Please show us a sign we can see.
The friends we have gained at minyan
   Are reinforcing our prayers to you
And we are praying for all of them
   What hurts them hurts us too.
   We are like a little family
   Trying to comfort one another
For a mish-a-berach or for kaddish
For a spouse, parent, sister or brother
For a child, a grandchild, or a special friend
   Who has been summoned
   They’ve heard their call
THE POWER OF PRAYER
   Will heal our ache
Given time we will all walk tall.

Estelle Seltzer
Morning Service

ברכות השחר

FOR THE BLESSING OF WORSHIP

Ma toe-vu o-ha-lecha, Ya-a-kov, mish-ke-no-te-cha, Yisrael!

How lovely are your tems, O Jacob, your dwelling-places, O Israel!

In your abundant lovingkindness, O God, let me enter Your house, reverently to worship in Your holy temple.

Lord, I love Your house, the place where your glory dwells. So I would worship with humility, I would seek blessing in the presence of God, my Maker.

To you, then, Lord, does my prayer go forth. May this be a time of joy and favor. In your great love, O God, answer me with Your saving truth.

FOR HEALTH

Blessed is our Eternal God, Creator of the universe, who has made our bodies with wisdom, combining veins, arteries, and vital organs into a finely balanced network.
Wondrous Fashioner and Sustainer of life, Source of our health and our strength, we give You thanks and praise.

* * *

FOR TORAH

*Boreh Atah, EM ALEKHENU, MELEKH YISROEL, ARZENU EMTZECHA ZEH PRANAIM BE-SEFIRAH

Blessed is the Eternal, our God, Ruler of the universe, who hallows us with Mitzvot, and commands us to engage in the study of Torah.

* * *

Eternal our God, make the words of Your Torah sweet to us, and to the House of Israel, Your people, that we and our children may be lovers of Your name and students of Your Torah. Blessed is the Eternal, the Teacher of Torah to God’s people Israel.

* * *

These are the obligations without measure, whose reward, too, is without measure:
* To honor father and mother:
  בברך את אביך
  ובברך את אמה
  * To perform acts of love and kindness:
  שזכרו עינה ורובה
  * To attend the house of study daily:
  וERCHANT בית המדרש
to welcome the stranger;

to visit the sick;

to rejoice with bride and groom;

to console the bereaved;

to pray with sincerity;

to make peace when there is strife.

And the study of Torah is equal to them all, because it leads to them all.

* * *

FOR THE SOUL

The soul that you have given me, O God, is a pure one! You have created and formed it, breathed it into me, and within me You sustain it. So long as I have breath, therefore, I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God and God of all ages, Master of all creation, Lord of every human spirit. Blessed is the Lord, in whose hands are the souls of all the living and the spirits of all flesh.

* * *

FOR LIFE

Blessed is the One who spoke, and the world came to be. Blessed is the Source of creation.

Blessed is the One whose word is deed, whose thought is fact.
Blessed is the One whose compassion covers the earth and all its creatures.
Blessed is the living and Eternal God, Ruler of the universe, divine Source of deliverance and help.

With songs of praise we extol You and proclaim Your Sovereignty, Our God and Ruler, for you are the source of life in the Universe.
Blessed is the Eternal God, to whom our praise is due.

**READER’S KADDISH**

Yitgadal v’yitkadash sh’mei raba
b’alma div’ra chi-ru-tei,
v’yamlich malchutei, b’chayei-chon
u-v’yomei-chon u-v’chayei
d’chol beit Yisraeil,
ba-a-gala u-vi-z’man ka-riv,
v’i-m’ru: a-mein.
Y’hei sh’mei raba m’vo-rach
l’alam u-l’almei al-ma-ya.
Yit-ba-rach v’yish-ta-bach,
v’yit-pa-ar v’yit-romam v’yit-nasei,
v’yit-hadar v’yit-a-leh v’yit-ha-lal
sh’mei d’ku-d’sha, b’rich hu,
L’ei-la min kol bir-cha-ta v’shi-ra-ta,
tush-b’cha-ta v’ne-che-ma-ta
da-a-mi-ran b’alma, v’i-m’ru: a-mein.

*4*
The Call to Worship

All Rise

Bar’chu et Adonai ha-m’vorach!

Praise the Lord, to whom our praise is due!

Baruch Adonai ha-m’vorach

l’olam va-ed!

Praised be the Lord to whom our praise is due, now and forever!

*   *

CREATION

Praised be the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes light and creates darkness, who ordains peace and fashions all things.

With compassion God gives light to the earth and all who dwell there; with goodness God renews the work of creation continually, day by day.

How manifold are Your works, O Lord; in wisdom You have made them all; the earth is full of Your creations.

Let all bless You, O Lord our God, for the excellence of Your handiwork, and for the glowing stars that You have made: let them glorify You forever. Blessed is the Lord, the Maker of light.

*5*
Deep is Your love for us, O Lord our God, and great is Your compassion. Our Maker and Ruler, our ancestors trusted You, and You taught them the laws of life: be gracious now to us, and teach us.

Have compassion upon us, O Source of mercy, and guide us to know and understand, learn and teach, observe and uphold with love all the teachings of Your Torah.

Enlighten us with Your Teaching, help us to hold fast to Your Mitzvot, and unite our hearts to love and revere Your name.

Then shall we never be shamed, for we shall put our trust in You, the great, holy, and awesome One. We shall rejoice and be glad in Your salvation, for You, O God, are the Author of many deliverances. In love You have chosen us and drawn us near to You to serve You in faithfulness and to proclaim Your unity.

Blessed are You, O God, who loves our people Israel with an unending love.
Sh'ma Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad!
*HEAR, O ISRAEL: ADONAI IS OUR GOD, ADONAI IS ONE!*

Baruch sheim k'vod malchuto l'olam va-ed!
*BLESSED IS GOD'S GLORIOUS NAME FOR EVER AND EVER!*

All are seated

V'AHAVTA

V'ahavta eit Adonai Elohecha b'chol
l'vav'cha u-v'chol naf-sh'cha u-v'chol
m'o-de-cha.

V'hayu ha-d'varim ha-ei-leh asher anochi
m'tza-v'cha hayom al l'va-ve-cha. V'shi-nantam
l'venecha, v'dibarta bam b'shiv-t'cha
b'vei-techa u-v'lech-t'cha va-darech,
u-v'shover-b'cha u-v'k'hu-me-cha. U-k'shar-tam l'ot
al ya-de-cha v'ha-yu l'to-ta-fot bein ei-ne-cha.
U-ch'tav-tam al m'zu-zot bei-te-cha
u-vi-sh'a-recha.

L'ma-an tiz-k'ru va-a-si-tem et kol
mitz-vai-tai, vi-h'yi-tem k'doshim
lei-lo-heichem. Ani Adonai Eloheichem asher
hotzei-ti et-chem mei-eretz Mitzrayim
l'hi-yot la-chem lei-lo-him. Ani Adonai
Elo-hei-chem.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your mind, with
all your strength, with all your being.
Set these words, which I command you this day, upon your
heart. Teach them faithfully to your children; speak of them
in your home and on your way, when you lie down and when
you rise up.
Bind them as a sign upon your hand; let them be a symbol
before your eyes; inscribe them on the doorposts of your
house, and on your gates.

Be mindful of all My Mitzvot, and do them: so shall you
consecrate yourselves to your God. I, the Lord, am your God
who led you out of Egypt to be your God; I, the Lord, am your God.
REDEMPTION

True and enduring, beloved and precious, awesome, good, and beautiful is this eternal teaching.

_This truth we hold to be for ever certain: the Eternal God is our Sovereign. God is the Rock of Jacob, our protecting Shield._

God abides through all generations; God’s name is Eternal. God’s throne stands firm; God’s sovereignty and faithfulness are everlasting.

_God’s words live and endure, true and precious to all eternity._

Lord our God, You redeemed us from Egypt;

_You set us free from the house of bondage._

For this the people who felt Your love sang songs of praise to You:

_The living God, high and exalted, mighty and awesome,_

Who humbles the proud and raises the lowly, who frees the captive and redeems the oppressed,

_who is the Answer to all who cry out to God._

All praise to God Most High, the Source of blessing! Like Moses and Israel, we sing to God this song of rejoicing:

*8*
MI CHAMOCHA

Mi cha-mo-cha ba-ei-lim, Adonai?
Mi ka-mo-cha, ne-dar ba-ko-desh
nora t'hilot, o-seh feh-leh?

Who is like You, Eternal One, among the gods that are worshipped?
Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders?

A new song the redeemed sang to Your name. At the shore of the Sea,
saved from destruction, they proclaimed Your sovereign power:

"Adonai yimloch l'o-lam va-ed!"

"י' נְבָלֹחַ לַעֲלָם וַאֲדֹנָיְוַ""

"The Eternal will reign for ever and ever!"

O Rock of Israel, come to Israel's help. Fulfill Your promise of
redemption for Judah and Israel. Our Redeemer is the Lord of Hosts,
the Holy One of Israel. Blessed is the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel.
O God,  
We Come Before You

O God, we come before You,  
a diverse assembly,  
a patchwork of pressures  
and anxieties.  
Many of us are tired.  
Many of us are alone.  
Many of us feel imprisoned by  
the shackles of the weekday world.  
Help us to live in Your presence.

We Are One

We are young, our experiences few.  
We are older, veterans of  
life’s teachings.

We have endured great adversity.  
We have been untouched by tragedy.

We are married; we are single.  
We are Jews of many varied traditions.

We are different from one another,  
and yet, we are one.

Having traveled many different roads,  
our separate journeys have led us all  
to this sacred place in our lives.

As united by tradition and by faith,  
our prayers join together.

Shirley Saltzman
All rise

T’filah

 Lair, שפתך תפתוחה, אפי ידים תחלקה.
Adonai, s’fatai tif-tach, u-fi yagid t’hilateha.

Eternal God, open my lips, that my mouth may declare your glory.

GOD OF ALL GENERATIONS

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu vei-lo-hei avoteinu v’i-mo-teinu:
Elohei Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak, vei-lo-hei Ya-a-kov.
Elohei Sarah, Elohei Rivkah, Elohei Lei-ah, vei-lo-hei Ra-cheil.
Ha-eil ha-gadol ha-gi-bor v’ha-no-ra, eil el-yon. Go-meil chasa-deem
tovim, v’ko-nei ha-kol, v’zo-cheir chas-dei avot v’i-mahot,
u-me-i vi g’u-la li-v’nei v’nei-hem, l’ma-an sh’mo, b’ahavah.*
Melech o-zeir u-mo-shi-a u-magein.
Baruch atah Adonai, magein Avraham v’ezrat Sarah.

*BETWEEN ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR ADD:
Zech-ainu l’chayim, melech chafaitz ba-chayim.
V’chatveinu b’sefer hachayim, l’mi’cha
elohim chayim.

GOD OF ALL GENERATIONS

We praise You, Lord our God and God of all generations: God
of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob; God of Sarah, God of Rebecca,
God of Leah, God of Rachel; great, mighty, and awesome God, God supreme.
Master of all the living, Your ways are ways of love. You remember
the faithfulness of our ancestors, and in love bring redemption to their
children’s children for the sake of Your name.*

* Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur add:
Remember us unto life, for You are the God who delights in life, and
inscribe us in the Book of Life, that Your will may prevail, O God of life.
GOD’S POWER

Eternal is Your might, O Lord; all life is Your gift; great is Your power to save!

With love You sustain the living, with great compassion give life to all. You send help to the falling and healing to the sick; You bring freedom to the captive and keep faith with those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Master of Might? Who is Your equal, O Lord of life and death, Source of salvation?* Blessed is the Lord, the Source of Life.

* On the Ten Days of Repentance insert:

Who is like You, Source of mercy, who in compassion sustains the life of Gods children?

* * *

SANCTIFICATION

We sanctify Your name on earth, even as all things, to the ends of time and space, proclaim Your holiness; and in the words of the prophet we say:

Ka-dosh, Ka-dosh, Ka-dosh A-do-nai tse-vah, me-lo chol ha-a-rets ke-vo-do.

Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts; the fullness of the whole earth is God’s glory!
They respond to Your glory with blessing:

כֶּבֶרֶךְ בֵּלֵדֶךְ מֶמְפֶּךְךָ.

Ba-ruch ke-vod Adonai mi-me-ko-mo.

Blessed is the glory of God in heaven and earth.

וַעֲדוּרֵּי פַּרְשָׁה בֵּרַעְק לְאָמָר:  

And this is Your sacred word:

וַעֲדוּרֵּי פַּרְשָׁה בֵּרַעְק לְאָמָר:  

Yim-loch Adonai le-o-lam, E-lo-ha-yich Tsi-yon, le-dor va-dor, Ha-le-lu-yah!

The Lord shall reign for ever: your God, O Zion, from generation to generation, Halleluyah!

לֹא רָוָּדַה בְּנֵי גְּדָלָה, נֹלֶהָּּ בֵּרַעְקֹת נֹאָדוּּתָּּ בְּרַעְקָּה.  

To all generations we will make known Your greatness, and to all eternity proclaim Your holiness. Your praise, O God, shall never depart from our lips.*

Blessed is the Lord, the holy God.

*On the Ten Days of Repentance conclude:

Blessed is the Lord, the holy Sovereign.

All are sealed

* *
FOR UNDERSTANDING

תנכה
אתה תカラー אתו ותוכלuku לאוןש בונים.变幻 ממאחרך דעה.صحة ו杨欢וך
ברוך אתה, ותעלם שפעך.

You favor us with knowledge and teach mortals understanding.
May you continue to favor us with knowledge, understanding, and insight.

Blessed is the Lord, gracious Giver of knowledge.

* * *

FOR REPENTANCE

תשובה
השכובו אبثנוא עלתרות, ודבקנו מבלה ליעברות, öğהנוון בתרוששה שילפה לברهة.
ברוך אתה, ותעלם שפעך.

Help us to return, our Maker, to Your Torah: draw us near,
O Sovereign God, to Your service; and bring us back into Your presence in perfect repentance.

Blessed is the Lord, who calls for repentance.

* * *

FOR FORGIVENESS

מלחה
סהלדנה אבנה על תואר, מחלילה נקלעה כי פשעינה כי
מולא ידך אוחזת.
ברוך אתה, ותעלם שפעך כללה.

Forgive us, our Creator, when we have sinned; pardon us, our
Sovereign God, when we transgress; for You are a forgiving God.

Blessed is the Lord, the gracious God, whose forgiveness is abundant.

* * *

FOR REDEMPTION

cצלאל
ראה נצפןแบรחה ותקב, נşturחון מפורחת קפועה שמו.
ולא יעלק אלוהים.
ברוך אתה, ותעלם שפעך.

Look upon our affliction and help us in our need; O mighty
Redeemer, redeem us speedily for Your name’s sake.

Blessed is the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel.

*14*
Heal us, O Lord, and we shall be healed; save us, and we shall be saved; grant us a perfect healing from all our wounds.

_Blessed is the Lord, the Healer of the sick._

* * *

_Blessed is the Lord, from whom all blessings flow._

* * *

_Blessed is the Lord, Redeemer of the oppressed._

* * *

_Blessed is the Sovereign Lord, who loves righteousness and justice._
FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

זיכרון

עליה הmıştıים עליה עמדו עליה נרה רפואית. מ- אלוהים
ויה שערא שמא עליה הפורשות נשען ממושית. יוסי חפניה
ענוה עליה.
כורש הכהן, כ- משה עם כוהן קדוש.

Have mercy, O Lord our God, upon the righteous and faithful of all peoples, and upon all of us. Uphold all who faithfully put their trust in You, and grant that we may always be numbered among them.

Blessed is the Lord, the Staff and Support of the righteous.

* * *

FOR JERUSALEM

שלום ירושלים

לירושלים צורצון ברכה יהינה, והנה שלום בראשון.
ישלח יכל משכה, והשכית עם הכורש.
כבר הכהן, כ- משה עם כוהן קדוש.

And turn in compassion to Jerusalem, Your city. Let there be peace in her gates, quietness in the hearts of her inhabitants. Let your Torah go forth from Zion and Your word from Jerusalem.

Blessed is the Lord, who gives peace to Jerusalem.

* * *

FOR DELIVERANCE

שומインターハ

אמר צורצון ברכה בראשון, והנה השכית עם הכורש.
כי יישאך חכמי כֶּלֶה ה'.
כבר הכהן, כ- משה עם כוהן קדוש.

Cause the plant of justice to spring up soon. Let the light of deliverance shine forth according to Your word, for we await Your deliverance all the day.

Blessed is the Lord, who will cause the light of deliverance to dawn for all the world.

*16*
FOR ACCEPTANCE OF PRAYER

Hear our voice, O Lord our God; have compassion upon us, and accept our prayer with favor and mercy, for You are a God who hears prayer and supplication.

_Blessed is the Lord, who hearkens to prayer._

* * *

WORSHIP

Be gracious, O Lord our God, to Your people Israel, and receive our prayers with love. O may our worship always be acceptable to You. Fill us with the knowledge that You are near to all who seek You in truth. Let our eyes behold Your presence in our midst and in the midst of our people in Zion.

_Blessed is the Lord, whose presence gives life to Zion and all Israel._

* * *

ON ROSH CHODESH, CHOL HAMO-EID, AND YOM HA-ATSMA-UT

Our God and God of all ages, be mindful of Your people Israel on this

first day of the new month,  
day of Pesach,  
day of Sukkot,  
day of independence,  
and renew in us love and compassion, goodness, life and peace.

This day remember us for well-being. _Amen_  
This day bless us with Your nearness. _Amen_  
This day help us to a fuller life. _Amen_
THANKSGIVING

We gratefully acknowledge that You are the Lord our God and God of our people, the God of all generations. You are the Rock of our life, the Power that shields us in every age. We thank You and sing Your praises: for our lives, which are in Your hand; for our souls, which are in Your keeping; for the signs of Your presence we encounter every day; and for Your wondrous gifts at all times, morning, noon, and night. You are Goodness: Your mercies never end; You are Compassion: Your love will never fail. You have always been our hope.

For all these things, O Sovereign God, let Your name be for ever exalted and blessed.

On the Ten Days of Repentance insert:

Let life abundant be the heritage of all Your children.

O God our Redeemer and Helper, let all who live affirm You and praise Your name in truth. Lord, whose nature is Goodness, we give You thanks and praise.

(For Chanukah and Purim go to page 21)
Peace, happiness, and blessing; grace and love and mercy:
may these descend on us, on all Israel, and all the world.

Bless us, our Creator, one and all, with the light of Your presence;
for by that light, O God, You have revealed to us the law of life:
to love kindness and justice and mercy, to seek blessing, life, and peace.

O bless Your people Israel and all peoples with enduring peace!*
Praised be the Lord, who blesses God’s people Israel with peace.

*On the Ten Days of Repentance conclude:
Teach us then to find our happiness in the search for righteousness and peace.
Blessed is the Lord, the Source of peace.
O God, keep my tongue from evil and my lips from deceit. Help me to be silent in the face of derision, humble in the presence of all. Open my heart to Your Torah, and I will hasten to do Your Mitzvot. Save me with Your power; in time of trouble be my answer, that those who love You may rejoice.

* * *

Yi-h'yu l'ratzon im-rei-fi
v'heg-yon libi l'fanecha,
Adonai, tzu-ri v'go-ali,
Adonai, tzu-ri ve-go-ali.

May the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable to You, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

or

Osheh shalom bi-m’ro-mav,
hu ya-a-seh shalom
aleinu v’al kol Yisrael,
v’i-m’ru: a-mein.

May God who causes peace to reign in the high heavens let peace descend on us, on all Israel, and all the world.

(Mi Shebeirach on page 23)
ON CHANUKAH

We give thanks for the redeeming wonders and the mighty deeds by which, at this season, our people was saved in days of old. In the days of the Hasmoneans, a tyrant arose against our ancestors, determined to make them forget Your Torah, and to turn them away from obedience to Your will. But You were at their side in time of trouble. You gave them strength to struggle and to triumph, that they might serve You in freedom. Through the power of Your spirit the weak defeated the strong, the few prevailed over the many, and the righteous were triumphant. Then Your children returned to Your house, to purify the sanctuary and kindle its lights. And they dedicated these days to give thanks and praise to Your great name.

ON PURIM

We give thanks for the redeeming wonders and the mighty deeds by which, at this season, our people was saved in days of old. In the days of Mordecai and Esther, the wicked Haman arose in Persia, plotting the destruction of all the Jews. He planned to destroy them in a single day, the thirteenth of Adar, and to permit the plunder of their possessions. But through Your great mercy his plan was thwarted, his scheme frustrated. We therefore thank and bless You, O great and gracious God!
O My God

O my God,
My soul’s companion,
My heart’s precious friend,
I turn to you.

I need to close out the noise,
To rise above the noise,
The noise that interrupts—
The noise that separates—
The noise that isolates.
I need to hear You again.

In the silence of my innermost being,
In the fragments of my yearned-for wholeness,
I hear whispers of Your presence—
Echoes of the past when You were with me,
When I felt Your nearness.
When together we walked,
When You held me close, embraced me in Your love,
Laughed with me in my joy,
Cried with me in my sorrow.
I yearn to hear You again.

In Your oneness, let me find healing.
In the promise of Your love, let me be soothed.
In Your wholeness, I too can become whole.

Please listen to my call—
help me find the words,
help me find the strength within,
help me shape my mouth, my voice, my heart
so that I can direct my spirit and find You in prayer.
In words only my heart can speak,
In songs only my soul can sing,
Lifting my eyes and heart to You.
Adonai s’fatai tiftach—open my lips, precious God,
so that I can speak with You again.

*22*
A Prayer for Healing

God, in our hearts we name those who are facing illness and pain. We join our prayers with the prayers of all who love them. Give them renewed comfort and courage. Strengthen in them the healing powers you have placed within us all. Guide the hands and hearts of those who are entrusted with their care. May the knowledge of Your love and ours give added hope to them and to their dear ones. May they find even greater strength because our prayers are linked with theirs.

Mi she-bei-rach avoteinu
M’kor ha-b’racha l’imoteinu,
May the Source of strength who blessed the ones before us,
help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing,
and let us say, amen.

Mi she-bei-rach imoteinu M’kor ha-bracha la’avoteinu,
bless those in need of healing with r’fuah sh’leimah:
the renewal of body, the renewal of spirit,
and let us say, amen.
Aleinu l’sha-bei-ach la’adon ha-kol, la-teit g’dulah l’yotseir breisheyt,
sh’lo asanu k’goy-ei ha-a-ra-tzot, v’lo sa-manu k’mishpachot ha-adamah;
Sheh-lo sam chelkeinu ka-heim, v’goraleinu k’choh ha-mo-nam.

Let us adore the ever-living God, and render praise unto God,
who spread out the heavens and established the earth,
whose glory is revealed in the heavens above,
and whose greatness is manifest throughout the world.
Adonai is our God; there is none else.

Va-a-nach-nu ko-reem u-mish-ta-cha-veem u-mo-deem lif-nei
melech mal-chei ha-m’la-cheem, ha-kadosh baruch hu.

We therefore bow in awe and thanksgiving before the One who is
Sovereign over all, the Holy and blessed One.

Please be seated.

May the time not be distant, O God, when Your name shall be
worshipped in all the earth, when unbelief shall disappear and error be
no more. Fervently we pray that the day may come when all shall turn
to You in love, when corruption and evil shall give way to integrity and
goodness, when superstition shall no longer enslave the mind, nor
idolatry blind the eye, when all who dwell on earth shall know that You
alone are God. O may all, created in Your image, become one in spirit
and one in friendship, for ever united in Your service. Then shall Your
kingdom be established on earth, and the word of Your prophet
fulfilled: “The Lord will reign for ever and ever.”

Ba-yom ha-hu yi-h’yeh Adonai echad, u-sh’mo echad!

On that day, You shall be One and Your name shall be One!
Before The Kaddish

Our thoughts turn to those who have departed this earth: our own loved ones, those whom our friends and neighbors have lost, the martyrs of our people whose graves are unmarked, and those of every race and nation whose lives have been a blessing to humanity. As we remember them, let us meditate on the meaning of love and loss, of life and death.

* * *

Meditations

1. The Tradition of Kaddish

The origins of the Kaddish are mysterious; angels are said to have brought it down from heaven....

It possesses wonderful power. Truly, if there is any bond strong enough to chain heaven to earth, it is this prayer. It keeps the living together, and forms a bridge to the mysterious realm of the dead. One might almost say that this prayer is the . . . guardian of the people by whom alone it is uttered; therein lies the warrant of its continuance. Can a people disappear and be annihilated so long as a child remembers its parents?

Because this prayer does not acknowledge death, because it permits the blossom, which has fallen from the tree of humankind, to flower and develop again in the human heart, therefore it possesses sanctifying power.

2. Facing Death

The contemplation of death should plant within the soul elevation and peace. Above all, it should make us see things in their true light. For all things which seem foolish in the light of death are really foolish in themselves. To be annoyed because So-and-so has slighted us or has been somewhat more successful in social distinctions, pulled himself somehow one rung higher up the ladder than ourselves - how ridiculous all this seems when we couple it with the thought of death! (continued on page 26)
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

continued:

To pass each day simply and solely in the eager pursuit of money or fame, this also seems like living with shadows when one might take one's part with realities. Surely when death is at hand we should desire to say, "I have contributed my grain to the great store of the eternal. I have borne my part in the struggle for goodness." And let no man or woman suppose that the smallest social act of goodness is wasted for society at large. All our help, petty though it be, is needed; and though we know not the manner, the fruit of every faithful service is gathered in. Let the true and noble words of a great teacher ring in conclusion upon our ears: "The growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs."

3. In Recent Grief

When cherished ties are broken, and the chain of love is shattered, only trust and the strength of faith can lighten the heaviness of the heart. At times, the pain of separation seems more than we can bear, but if we dwell too long on our loss we embitter our hearts and harm ourselves and those about us.

The Psalmist said that in his affliction he learned the law of God. And in truth, grief is a great teacher, when it sends us back to serve and bless the living. We learn how to counsel and comfort those who, like ourselves, are bowed with sorrow. We learn when to keep silence in their presence, and when a word will assure them of our love and concern.

Thus, even when they are gone, the departed are with us, moving us to live as, in their higher moments, they themselves wished to live. We remember them now; they live in our hearts; they are an abiding blessing.

*26*
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

4. After a Tragic Loss

O God, help me to live with my grief!

Death has taken my beloved, and I feel that I cannot go on. My faith is shaken; my mind keeps asking: Why? Why does joy end in sorrow? Why does love exact its price in tears? Why?

O God, help me to live with my grief!

Help me to accept the mystery of life. Help me to see that even if my questions were answered, even if I did know why, the pain would be no less, the loneliness would remain bitter beyond words. Still my heart would ache.

O God, help me to triumph over my grief!

Help me to endure this night of anguish. Help me to walk through the darkness with faith in tomorrow. Give me comfort; give me courage; turn me to deeds that bless the living.

O God, help me to triumph over my grief.

5. How Can We Understand Death?

What can we know of death, we who cannot understand life?
We study the seed and the cell, but the power deep within them will always elude us.
Though we cannot understand, we accept life as the gift of God. Yet death, life’s twin, we face with fear.
But why be afraid? Death is a haven to the weary, a relief for the sorely afflicted. We are safe in death as in life.
There is no pain in death. There is only the pain of the living as they recall shared loves, and as they themselves fear to die.
Calm us, O Lord, when we cry out in our fear and our grief. Turn us anew toward life and the world. Awaken us to the warmth of human love that speaks to us of You.
We shall fear no evil as we affirm Your kingdom of life.
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

6. A Philosophy of Life and Death

Judaism teaches us to understand death as part of the Divine pattern of the universe. Actually, we could not have our sensitivity without fragility. Mortality is the tax that we pay for the privilege of love, thought, creative work - the toll on the bridge of being from which clods of earth and snow-peaked mountain summits are exempt. Just because we are human, we are prisoners of the years. Yet that very prison is the room of discipline in which we, driven by the urgency of time, create.

7. The Blessing of Memory

It is hard to sing of oneness when our world is not complete, when those who once brought wholeness to our life have gone, and naught but memory can fill the emptiness their passing leaves behind.

But memory can tell us only what we were, in company with those we loved; it cannot help us find what each of us, alone, must now become. Yet no one is really alone; those who live no more, echo still within our thoughts and words, and what they did is part of what we have become.

We do best homage to our dead when we live our lives most fully, even in the shadow of our loss. For each of our lives is worth the life of the whole world; in each one is the breath of the Ultimate One. In affirming the One, we affirm the worth of each one whose life, now ended, brought us closer to the Source of life, in whose unity no one is alone and every life finds purpose.

8. In Praise of Lives Now Gone

תגלו ח旻הש שפיה לבר

This is the profound praise of the living,
Praise for the generous gift of life.
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

Praise for the presence of loved ones,
the bonds of friendship,
the link of memory.

Praise for the toil and searching,
the dedication and vision,
the ennobling aspirations.

Praise for the precious moorings of faith,
for courageous souls,
for prophets, psalmists, and sages.

Praise for those who walked before us,
the sufferers in the valley of shadows,
the steadfast in the furnace of hate.

Praise for the God of our people,
the Source of all growth and goodness,
the Promise on which we build tomorrow.

9. We Live in Our Work

Eternal God, the generations come and go before You. Brief is their time. Passing, they leave many of their tasks unfinished, their plans unfulfilled, their dreams unrealized. It would be more than we could bear, but for the faith that our little day finds its permanence in Your eternity, and our work its completion in the unfolding of Your purpose for humanity.

At this sacred moment we turn our thoughts to those we love who have gone from life. We recall the joy of their companionship. We feel a pang, the echo of that intensified grief when first their death lay before our stricken eyes. Now we know that they will never vanish, so long as heart and thought remain within us. By love are they remembered, and in memory they live.

O God, grant that their memory may bring strength and blessing. May the nobility in their lives and the high ideals they cherished endure in our thoughts and live on in our deeds. May we, carrying on their work, help to redeem Your promise that life shall prevail.
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

10. The Life of Eternity

The light of life is a finite flame. Like the sabbath candles, life is kindled, it burns, it glows, it is radiant with warmth and beauty. But soon it fades; its substance is consumed, and it is no more. In light we see; in light we are seen. The flames dance and our lives are full. But as night follows day, the candle of our life burns down and gutters. There is an end to the flames. We see no more and are no more seen. Yet we do not despair, for we are more than a memory slowly fading into the darkness. With our lives we give life. Something of us can never die: we move in the eternal cycle of darkness and death, of light and life.

11. The Spirit Lives On

“The Lord gives; The Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” Early or late, all must answer the summons to return to the Reservoir of Being. For we lose our hold on life when our time has come, as the leaf falls from the bough when its day is done. The deeds of the righteous enrich the world, as the fallen leaf enriches the soil beneath. The dust returns to the earth, the spirit lives on with God. Like the stars by day, our beloved dead are not seen by mortal eyes. Yet they shine on forever; theirs is eternal peace. Let us be thankful for the companionship that continues in a love stronger than death. Sanctifying the name of God, we do honor to their memory.

12. Strength for Those Who Mourn

In nature’s ebb and flow, God’s eternal law abides. God is our support in the struggles of life is also our hope in death. God’s powers gives us strength; God’s love comforts us. O Life of our life, Soul of our soul, cause Your light to shine into our hearts. Fill us with trust in You, and turn us again to the tasks of life. And may the memory of our loved ones inspire us to continue their work for the coming of Your Sovereignty.
CONCLUDING PRAYERS

13. Our Martyrs

We have lived in numberless towns and villages; and in too many of them we have endured cruel suffering. Some we have forgotten; others are sealed into our memory, a wound that does not heal. A hundred generations of victims and martyrs; still their blood cries out from the earth. And so many, so many at Dachau, at Buchenwald, at Babi Yar, and . . .

What can we say? What can we do? How bear the unbearable, or accept what life has brought to our people? All who are born must die, but how shall we compare the slow passage of our time with the callous slaughter of the innocent, cut off before their time?

They lived with faith. Not all, but many. And, surely, many died with faith; faith in God, in life, in the goodness that even flames cannot destroy. May we find a way to the strength of that faith, that trust, that sure sense that life and soul endure beyond this body’s death.

They have left their lives to us: let a million prayers rise whenever Jews worship; let a million candles glow against the darkness of these unfinished lives.

*   *

We recall the loved ones whom death has recently taken from us, those who died at this season in years past, and those whom we have taken into our hearts with our own. . . . The memories of all of them are with us; our griefs and sympathies are mingled as we praise God and pray for the coming of God’s Sovereignty.
Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba b'alma div'ra shi-ru-tei
v'yamlich malchutei, b'chayei-chon u-v'yomei-chon u-v'chayei d'chol beit
Yisrael, ba-a-gala u-vi-z'man ka-riv, v'i-m'ru: amein.

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'vo-rach l'alam u-l'almei al-ma-ya.
Yit-ba-rach v'yish-ta-bach, v'yit-pa-ar v'yit-romam v'yit-nasei, v'yit-hadar
v'yit-a-leh v'yit-ha-lal sh'mei d'ku-d'sha, b'rich hu, l'ei-la min kol
bir-cha-ta v'shi-ra-ta, tush-b'cha-ta v'ne-che-ma-ta, da-a-mi-ran b'alma,
v'i-m'ru: amein.

Y'hei sh'la-ma raba min sh'ma-ya v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael,
v'i-m'ru: amein.

Oseh shalom bi-m'ro-mav, hu ya-a-seh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael,
v'im'ru: amein.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort to all who are bereaved among us. Amen.
MEDITATIONS AND READINGS

1

Prayer is speech, but not ‘mere’ speech. The word is not to be despised. Words have power over the soul. “Hear, O Israel!” is a cry and an affirmation, a reminder of glory and martyrdom, a part of the very essence of our people’s history. Our prayerbooks are but words on paper; they can mean little or nothing. Yet the searching spirit and questing heart may find great power in their words. Through them we link ourselves to all the generations of our people, pouring out our souls in prayer with those of our brothers and sisters. These words, laden with the tears and joys of centuries, have the power to bring us into the very presence of God. Not easily, not all at once, not every time, but somehow, sometimes, the worshipper who offers up his heart and mind without reservation will know that he has touched the Throne of Glory.

2

I regard the old Jewish Siddur as the most important single Jewish book, a more personal expression, a closer record, of Jewish sufferings, Jewish needs, Jewish hopes and aspirations, than the Bible itself. For one thing the Bible is too grand and universal to be exclusively Jewish (as Shakespeare is not the typical Englishman), and for another, whatever is quintessentially needed for daily use has been squeezed out of it into the prayerbook and so made our daily own. And if you want to know what Judaism is — the question which has no answer if debated on the plane of intellectual argument — you can find it by absorbing that book. The Jewish soul is mirrored there as nowhere else, mirrored or rather embodied there: the individual’s soul in his private sorrows, and the people’s soul in its historic burdens, its heroic passion and suffering, its unflagging faith, through the ages.

3

If anyone comes to public worship and leaves with the feeling that he has got nothing out of it, let him ask: Did I bring anything to it? Most often the answer to the second will supply the cause of the first. A Stubborn heart, a rebellious heart, a cold heart that cherishes its coldness, a critical mind that looks for objects of criticism, will not profit. It is true of public in high degree that only they receive who give. The influence of public worship, like that of electricity, is felt only where there is a capacity for receiving it. Stone and ice are spiritual non-conductors.

*33*
Public worship draws out the latent life in the human spirit. Those who, when alone, do not, or cannot, pray, find an impulse to prayer when they worship with others; and some will pray together who cannot pray alone, as many will sing in chorus who would not sing solos. As two walking together in some dark woods feel the stronger and braver each for the other's near presence, so many who are spiritually weak in themselves will find spiritual strength in a common spiritual effort. That is the value of public worship for the individual. It has also a social value.

Public worship expresses the sanctity we feel in the social bond. A congregation at worship is a society declaring its devotion to God, a community forged by faith in God. Here is an expression that can deepen the social spirit and strengthen the bond of sympathy among men and women. If in public worship I realize that my prayers are also the prayers of the one by my side, it will make us more effectively aware of our common humanity and implant a spirit which will be potent for social good. They who worship God together, bring God into their mutual relations. If public worship does not produce this result, then it is but private worship in a public place. If it does bring men and women closer together under the influence of God, then it is a way to the sanctification of human society.

It is not you alone who pray, or we, or those others; all things pray, and all things pour forth their souls. The heavens pray, the earth prays, every creature and every living thing. In all life, there is longing. Creation is itself but a longing, a kind of prayer to the Almighty. What are the clouds, the rising and the setting of the sun, the soft radiance of the moon and the gentleness of the night? What are the flashes of the human mind and the storms of the human heart? They are all prayers — the outpouring of boundless longing for God.

The universe whispers that all things are intertwined. Yet at times we hear the loud cry of discord. To which voice shall we listen? Although we long for harmony, we cannot close our ears to the noise of war, the rasp of hate. How dare we speak of concord, when the fact and symbol of our age is Auschwitz?

The intelligent heart does not deny reality. We must not forget the grief of yesterday, nor ignore the pain of today. But yesterday is past. It cannot tell us what tomorrow will bring. If there is goodness at heart of life, then its power, like the power of evil, is real. Which shall prevail? Moment by moment we choose between them. If we choose rightly, and often enough, the broken fragments of our world will be restored to wholeness.

For this we need strength and help. We turn in hope, therefore, to a Power beyond us. God has many names, but God is One. God creates; God sustains; God loves; God inspires us with the hope that we can make ourselves one as the Lord is One.
Eternal God, like all the generations of Israel, we turn to You in hope. We need You as we need air to breathe. Be enthroned in our hearts; let Your law of justice rule the world. O may all Your children be filled with a love of freedom and truth, that tyranny may vanish and the reign of righteousness be established everywhere on earth. Then will the suffering end of all who live in lands of darkness and persecution.

Your spirit pervades the world. Your love encompasses the earth. We pray for the peace of all lands and peoples. And we pray for our brothers and sisters in the land of Israel. In our pilgrimage among the nations, our people have always turned in love to the land where Israel was born, where our prophets taught their imperishable message of justice and peace, and where our poets sang their deathless songs of love for You and of Your love for us and all humanity.

*Throughout the ages we have prayed that Zion might be restored: it has been for us the land of hope and promise. May the promise now come true in all its fullness; may we be privileged to bring a new light to shine upon Zion. And may we who live in lands of freedom be imbued with the knowledge that all Jews, wherever they live, are on e people, responsible before You to one another. Willingly and joyfully may we share in the work of redemption, that the time may come again when the Law will go forth from the house of Israel, and Your word from the tents of Jacob.*

Bless, O God, this congregation, those who lead and serve it, those who contribute to its strength. Bless all who enter this House, that the worship offered within its walls may be worthy of Your greatness and Your love, and that all who seek Your presence here may find it. For the joy of community, the gift of diversity, and the vision of harmony, we offer our grateful thanks.

Bless our land and all its inhabitants. Prosper us in all our undertakings. Be with those whom we have chosen to lead us, that they may strive to establish justice and opportunity for all, and labor to bring peace to the family of nations.

Bless the household of Israel wherever they dwell. Be with us here, where we worship You in freedom. And may those who live under oppressive rule find release and liberty speedily, in our own day.

May Your favor rest upon Israel, her land, her people. Protect her against hatred and war. Grant that the promise of her beginning may ripen into fulfillment, bringing comfort to those who seek refuge, light to those who dwell in darkness, new hope to all humanity. And let us say: Amen.
In this moment of silence a still, small voice speaks in the depths of my spirit. It speaks to me of all that I must do to come closer to God and grow in God’s likeness. I must work with untiring faithfulness, even when no one’s eye is upon me. I must come to the end of each day with a feeling that I used its gifts wisely and faced its trials courageously. I must try to judge others less harshly and love them more freely. I must be loyal to my people and heritage, seeking greater knowledge of our tradition and putting its teachings to work in my life. May I become ever more conscious of my dignity as a child of God, and may I learn to see the divinity in every person I meet. Then indeed shall I come closer to God and grow in God’s likeness.

Looking inward, I see that all too often I fail to use time and talent to improve myself and to serve others. And yet there is in me much goodness, and a yearning to use my gifts for the well-being of those around me. This Sabbath calls me to renew my vision, to fulfill the best that is within me. For this I look to God for help.

Give meaning to my life and substance to my hopes; help me understand those about me and fill me with the desire to serve them. Let me not forget that I depend on others as they depend on me; quicken my heart and hand to lift them up; make fruitful my words of prayer, that they may fulfill themselves in deeds.

Normally, we are compelled to pass from one task to another in quick succession; one duty is completed only to be followed immediately by the next; a difficultly surmounted, a problem solved is replaced with such rapidity by further worries and by other cares that we have no choice, in daily life, but to live from one minute to another, to eliminate from our minds everything but that which is immediately ahead of us and which demands immediate attention.

In worship, however, we are freed from the pressure of life. There are no immediate tasks to be performed; no insistent needs clamoring for immediate satisfaction. For once, we are guaranteed Time and Quietude – the rarest possessions in life today. For once, we can escape from the tyranny of the next minute with its worries, tasks and duties.

And when, as now, we do have time to take a larger view of life; when, in calm reflection, we enlarge our vision until we see life in its entirety, considerations come before us which tend to be excluded in the rush of everyday experience. Elements in life, which at other times can receive but little of our attention now come into the forefront of our thought. We can now allow our spiritual needs to take precedence over those material satisfactions to which, usually, we pay such high regard and to which, normally, we devote so large a measure of our effort. In worship, the foremost place in our considerations is given to that which develops character, all that which lends nobility and dignity to human life, all wherein we can express the greatness of the human spirit. We consider what it means to us and for our lives, that we have been endowed by God with reason, with a power to love, with a sense of the beautiful, and with a knowledge of righteousness.
Each of us enters the sanctuary with a different need.

Some hearts are full of gratitude and joy:
They are overflowing with the happiness of love and the joy of life;
they are eager to confront the day, to make the world more fair;
they are recovering from illness or have escaped misfortune.
And we rejoice with them.

Some hearts ache with sorrow:
Disappointments weigh heavily upon them, and they have tasted despair;
families have been broken; loved ones lie on a bed of pain;
death has taken those whom they cherished.
May our presence and sympathy bring them comfort.

Some hearts are embittered:
They have sought answers in vain; ideals are mocked and betrayed;
life has lost its meaning and value.
May the knowledge that we too are searching, restore their hope
and give them courage to believe that not all is emptiness.

Some spirits hunger:
They long for friendship; they crave understanding; they yearn for warmth.
May we in our common need and striving gain strength from one another, as we share our joys, lighten each other’s burdens, and pray for the welfare of our community.

Lord our God, You are our unfailing help. Darkness does not conceal You from the eye of faith, nor do the forces of destruction obscure Your presence. Above the fury of human evil and the blows of chance You abide, the Eternal God. When pain and sorrow try our souls, grant us courage to meet them undismayed and with faith that does not waver. Let not the tears that must come to every eye blind us to Your goodness.
Amen.
Among our many appetites there
is a craving after God.
There is a talent for worshiping God.
Jews who wandered in deserts
beneath the stars
Knew their hearts were hungry for God.
Jews who studied in candle-lit ghetto rooms
Thirsted longingly after God.
In tent or hut or slum our people
prayed to God.
But we who are smothered with comfort
Sometimes forget to listen.
Help us, O God, to recognize our need,
To hear the yearning whisper of our hearts.
Help us to seek the silence of the desert
And the thoughtfulness of the house of study.
Bless us, like our ancestors in ancient days
With that most precious gift:
a sense of Your presence.
Brush us with the wind of
the wings of Your being.
Fill us with the awe of Your holiness.
And we, too, will praise, glorify,
and exalt Your name.
Surround me with stillness, tiny ripples spreading across the pond, touched by one finger of Your hand, calmed by the warmth of Your palm. Croon the wordless melody that fills my being with peace. Under the spreading tree of Your affection, I will sit and meditate on the goodesses You have brought, counting the happy moments like glistening beads strung to adorn my days. Light the shadowed corners with gentle glow, to fill my being with peace. Drape about me the dappled sunlight of Your teachings, opening my eyes to the search, clearing my heart of the small distractions that I might find the answers within myself. Blow the breeze of compassion upon my brow, breathing the sigh of peace. Let me rest by the water, probing gently for the sense of what I see, releasing my hurts to restore my spirit, feeling You guide me toward a distant shore.
May you live to see your world fulfilled
May your destiny be for worlds still to come
May you trust in generations past and yet to be
May your eyes shine with the light of holy words
And may your face reflect the brightness of the heavens
May your lips ever speak wisdom, your fulfillment be in justice
Even as you ever yearn to listen to the words of
The Holy Ancient One of old.

May your heart be filled with intuition
And your words be filled with insight
May songs of praise be upon your tongue
Your vision straight before you
Even as you ever yearn to listen to the words of
The Holy Ancient One of old.

How greatly we are blessed!
How good is our portion.
How pleasant our lot.
How beautiful our heritage.
What Death Cannot Destroy

Death cannot sever our connection to those we have lost. The soul is eternal and can never be extinguished. But not only the soul survives the grave. The bonds of love are stronger than death. The lessons that our loved ones taught us, their goodness, their deeds, their wisdom will remain with us always. They have left a permanent imprint upon our souls that can never be erased. They continue to guide us wherever we go.

Most people think heaven is a far-off place. But perhaps heaven is closer than we think, perhaps our loved ones are with us. Perhaps they are silently watching over us and shielding us and guiding our steps. I believe that we are surrounded by the loving presence of those we have loved and lost. May they continue to be with us; may they bless us and inspire us to goodness, in death as they did in life.

Rabbi Naomi Levy

Days pass and the years vanish, and we walk sightless among miracles. O God, fill our eyes with seeing and our minds with knowing; Let there be moments when Your presence, like lightning, illumines the darkness in which we walk.

Help us to see, wherever we gaze, that the bush burns unconsumed.

And we, clay touched by God, will reach out for holiness, and exclaim in wonder:

"How filled with awe is this place, and we did not know it!" Blessed are You, O, God, who renews our vision day by day.
You are strong when you take your grief and teach it to smile.

You are brave when you overcome your fear, and help others to do the same.

You are happy when you see a flower and give it your blessing.

You are loving when your own pain does not blind you to the pain of others.

You are wise when you learn from all people.

You are true when you admit there are times when you fool yourself.

You are alive when tomorrow’s hope means more to you than yesterday’s mistake.

You are growing when you know what you are but not what you will come to be.

You are free when you are in control of yourself, and do not wish to control others.

You are honorable when you find honor in honoring others.

You are generous when you can take as sweetly as you give.

You are humble when you put the needs of others before your own.

You are caring when you see me as I am.

You are moral when you treat me as you would like to be treated.

You are merciful when you forgive in others the faults you condemn in yourself.

You are beautiful when you don’t need a mirror to tell you.

You are open when you listen before you respond.

You are rich when you never need more than you have.
Strange is our situation here upon earth. Each of us comes for a short visit, not knowing why, yet sometimes seeming to divine a purpose. From the standpoint of daily life, however, there is one thing we do know; that we are here for the sake of each other, above all, for those upon whose smile and well-being our own happiness depends, and also for the countless unknown souls with whose fate we are connected by a bond of sympathy. Many times a day, I realize how much my own outer and inner life is built upon the labors of others, both living and dead, and how earnestly I must exert myself in order to give in return as much as I have received and am still receiving.

Albert Einstein

Our prayers are answered not when we are given what we ask, but when we are challenged to be what we can be.

Rabbi Morris Adler

I had thought that your death
Was a waste and a destruction,
A pain of grief hardly to be endured.
I am only beginning to learn
That your life was a gift and a growing
and a loving left to me.
The desperation of death
Destroyed the existence of love,
But the fact of death
Cannot destroy what has been given.
I am learning to look at your life again
Instead of your death and your departing.
We are family
when we communicate
with the warmth
of a word or a smile.

We are family
when we share
the bitterness of tears
the crystal joy of merriment.

We are family
when one of us is gone
and all of us
are desolate.

May all who we honor
with our prayers
live in our memories
and our lives.

Author Unknown

When I am feeling self-pity, God,
help me to see beyond myself.
When I am feeling despair, restore me to hope.
When I shut people out, help me to believe
in the healing power of companionship.
Remind me that I am not alone, that I am needed,
And that You are with me, now and always.

Rabbi Naomi Levy
Here in the dark valley of my sorrow, I am alone. 
Alone with new fears, alone with longing regrets, 
Alone with questions. Why? Why?

Oh God, enter this isolation. 
Open me to my friends, soften me to 
Receive the caring of those who reach out. 
Surround my grief. Wrap me in Your brightness.

Turn my heart to You. 
Help me, even now, to trust in Your peace. 
Open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise.

Master of the universe, grant me the ability to be alone:

May it be my custom to go outdoors each day, 
among the trees and grasses, among all 
growing things, there to be alone and enter into prayer. 
There may I express all that is in my heart, 
talking to You, to whom I belong, 
And may all grasses, trees, and plants 
awake at my coming. 
Send the power of their life into my prayer, 
making whole my heart and my speech 
through the life and spirit of growing things, 
made whole by their transcendent Source.

R. Nachman of Breslov
Shall I cry out in anger, O God,  
Because Your gifts are mine but for a while?  
Shall I forget the blessing of health  
The moment it gives way to illness and pain?  
Shall I be ungrateful for the moment of laughter,  
The seasons of joy, the days of gladness and festivity?  
When a fate beyond my understanding takes from me  
Friends and kin whom I have cherished, and leaves me  
Bereft of shining presences that have lit my way  
Through years of companionship and affection,  
When tears cloud my eyes and darken the world,  
And my heart is heavy within me,  
Shall I blot from the mind the love  
I have known and in which I have rejoiced?  

Shall I grieve for a youth that has gone  
Once my hair is gray and my shoulders bent,  
And forget days of vibrancy and power?  
Shall I, in days of adversity, fail to recall  
The hours of joy and glory You once granted me?  
Shall the time of darkness put out forever  
The glow of the light in which I once walked?  
Give me the vision, O God, to see and feel  
That imbedded deep in each of Your gifts  
Is a core of eternity, undiminished and bright,  
An eternity that survives the dread hours of affliction and misery.  
Those I have loved, though now beyond my view,  
Have given form and quality to my life,  
And they live on, unfailingly feeding  
My heart and mind and imagination.

Rabbi Morris Adler
The earth has covered only that which was mortal
Of those to whom we have said our farewell.
We shall not see again here on earth
The familiar glowing face, the warm illuminated eyes,
Nor the sound of their welcome footsteps as they come home.
We shall not sit again face to face,
Across the family table, or side by side
in the home of a friend or in worship or raptly
Listening to a great melody from singer or symphony.
We shall not feel once more the kiss
That evoked from us our deepest response.
Yet death has failed and must surrender
To memory, which gives a reprieve to
those doomed by it.
For the beloved who is gone
Lives and will always live through the years
Not in some distant corner of our being
To be uncovered only in a rare moment
Or by a sudden surge of recall.
The beloved has become a presence not
merely accompanying us as of yore,
But indwelling and inseparable,
Rooted so deep that life cannot
Carry us far from the cherished
And now hallowed center of memory and love,
Thy hand, O Death, has been stayed.
Thou can’st no longer inflict oblivion,
Or doom to full disappearance
Those who were life of our life.
They live and move with us,
In spheres beyond thy dominion.
We thank thee, O God of life and love,
For the resurrecting gift of memory
Which endows Thy children fashioned in Thy image
With the God-like sovereign power
To give immortality through love.
Blessed be Thou, O God,
Who enablest Thy children to remember.

Rabbi Morris Adler
At the rising of the sun and at its going down, we remember them.
At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of the winter, we remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.
At the shining of the sun and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.
At the beginning of the year and at its end, we remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.
When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.
When we have joy we crave to share, we remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make, we remember them.
When we have achievements that are based on them, we remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

Rabbi Sylvan Kamens
Rabbi Jack Reimer

*48*
Death for us 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 remembrances 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 have the right to mourn
for others and for ourselves.

It is the dignity of the soul
to hold onto the past;
it is the dignity of the spirit
to take hold of the future,

To love again 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 Schulweis

*49*
When someone loses a loved one
There is really nothing one can say
Perhaps an embrace or a loving touch
May help to soothe their day.

Spouting platitudes such as given time
And your ache will disappear
To the one who has lost a loved one
It will only fall on a deaf ear.

For the person who is grieving
Their entire world has fallen apart
They are living in a time warp
Their affliction a broken heart.

When someone loses a loved one
Just be there to hear what they say
Let it be known you are there to listen
To help get them on their way
Share their memories of good and bad times
It is one way to help them feel
And allow them whatever time is needed
For them to sufficiently heal.

When someone loses a loved one
There is not much one can say
Just knowing you are there for them
May help comfort them that day.

Estelle Seltzer
A Prayer for Tolerance

Teach us, God, to treasure the differences that distinguish one person from another. Fill us with the strength to overcome senseless fear and hatred.

Open our hearts to the radiance that shines forth from every human soul. Inspire us to shed our apathy; remind us that it is our obligation to be responsible for one another.

Open our ears to the cries of all who are in need of our assistance. Give us the courage to combat prejudice and intolerance wherever they exist.

Teach us to see each other through Your eyes, God. In Your eyes all people are equally loved, equally precious. Bless us all, God, with compassion, with kindness, and with peace. Amen.

Rabbi Naomi Levy
TO THOSE I LOVE

If I should ever leave you
whom I love
To go along the silent way,
grieve not,
Nor speak of me with tears,
but laugh and talk
Of me as if I were beside you there
I'd come-I'd come,
could I but find a way.
But would not tears and
grief be barriers?
And when you hear a song
or see a bird
I loved, please do not let
the thought of me
Be sad...For I am
loving you just as
I always have...
Your were so good to me.
There are so many things
I wanted still to do...
So many things I wanted to
say to you ...  
Remember that I
did not fear...It was
just leaving you
that was so hard to face...
We cannot see beyond...
But this I know-
I loved you so-
'twas heaven here with you.

Isla Pascal Richardson
“Human beings do not live forever. We live less than the time it takes to blink an eye, if we measure our lives against eternity. So it may be asked what value is there to a human life. There is so much pain in the world. What does it mean to have to suffer so much if our lives are nothing more than the blink of an eye?”

He paused again, his eyes misty now, then went on.

“I learned a long time ago, that a blink of an eye in itself is nothing. But the eye that blinks, that is something. A span of life is nothing. But the man who lives that span, he is something. He can fill that tiny span with meaning, so its quality is immeasurable though its quantity may be insignificant.”

Chaim Potok
YOUR CANVAS of LIFE

Paint your own canvas of life
A perfect picture is to allow God’s love
To move through you
To uplift you
To begin from the inside out
By loving yourself first
By knowing who you are
So that you will be able to love
Unconditionally
Love is blind and sees only good
Love is being able to look beyond the other person
To see for them what they are unable to see
For themselves
Paint your own canvas of life
Surrounding yourself with beauty
Of God’s magnificent rainbow
Make each stroke of your brush meaningful
When painting your canvas of life
Remembering always that by loving and sharing
You will have created your own masterpiece.

Estelle Seltzer
I USED TO BE A PART OF YOU

I used to be a part of you
belong to you
the extension of your being
but now
you live with me
are the spark
of my consciousness
I say Kaddish for you
with you
as you
sing your melodies
speak your words
hearing your voice in mine
and my eyes
have somehow started to reflect
yours.
I used to be a part of you
protected by your presence
by your light
but now
the time is mine,
and alone
I must be more than myself;
your child
has become your heir
has become you.

Author unknown

*55*