

YIZKOR SERVICE

Congregation
Gates of Heaven

Schenectady, New York



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INTRODUCTION

The Yizkor Service is a unique ritual of public worship. It combines the private personal prayers for our own beloved dead with the collective public recitation of prayers for all the martyrs and heroes of our faith and our people through all the ages. This Memorial Hour is the time for every member of every congregational family in the household of Israel to pray together, to share with one another the cup of sorrow and of remembrance.

Dear Friends,

Yizkor, remember. This is a sacred task we have before us. Officially, four times a year, we gather as a community to remember loved ones who are no longer with us. We gather to pray to God for consolation and comfort. We seek to understand this mystery we call death. We remember our own loved ones, those whom our friends and neighbors have lost and those who have enriched humanity by their presence on this earth. As we pray and reflect, the words of our liturgy are designed to move us and help us frame the feelings that are deep in our hearts. The music stirs the feelings of loss and longing. The psalmist's words are beginning to make sense to us: "Our days are like grass..." How fragile is life and how limited is our time to embrace it.

But beyond the moments when we say the prayers and perform the rites, we also remember. We see our loved ones for a fleeting moment. We encounter them as we act as they did. Tears come to us at moments when nobody else sees. Those whom we love are never truly gone as long as we remember them. Their memories inspire us to live our lives as they wanted us to do. We remember them with simple tasks. We remember them on set dates. We remember them in the dark of night and the light of the sun. We remember them for the abiding blessing that they continue to be throughout our lifetimes.

Yizkor, remember. These words we say have meaning. They voice longing and yearning. They help us praise God when the heart is heavy. We should remind ourselves that the prayers belong to us because they come from within us. I encourage you to allow the words and melodies to pierce your heart.

Remember your loved ones with blessings of love. Comfort those around you who lost their loved ones so that no one is alone in grief. Remember the leaders and the righteous of humanity whose diligent effort made our lives sweeter. Remember the martyrs of our people and those who have no one left to say *kaddish* for them so that their lives have meaning and merit. Remember... remember... remember.

May God grant us all consolation and comfort.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Matthew A. Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'F'.

Rabbi

REFLECTION AND MOURNING

OUR DAYS ARE LIKE GRASS

Our days are like grass.
We shoot up like flowers that fade
and die as the chill wind passes
over them, yet Your love for those
who revere You is everlasting,
Your righteousness
extends to all generations.

אָנוֹשׁ בְּחָצִיר יָמָיו;
בְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה בֶּן יָצִיץ.
כִּי רוּחַ עֲבָרָה-בּוֹ וְאֵינָנוּ,
וְלֹא יִבְרָנּוּ עוֹד מְקוֹמוֹ.
וְחֶסֶד יְיָ מְעוֹלָם וְעַד-עוֹלָם
עַל-יִרְאָיו, וְצַדִּיקָתוֹ לְבָנֵי בָנִים.

THE OLD PRAYER BOOK

This book of prayers, old and stained with tears,
I take into my hand.
And unto the God of my fathers and mothers,
Who from ages past has been their Rock and Refuge,
I call in my distress.

In ancient words, seared with the pain of generations,
I pour out my sorrow.
May these words that know the heavenly paths,
Ascend aloft unto God on high,
To convey to God that which my tongue cannot express,
All that lies deep hidden within my heart.

May these words, simple and true, speak for me before
the Holy One, Entreating God's mercy.

Perchance the heavenly God who hearkened to my
parents' prayers,
Who gave them courage and strength
To bear all their woe and degradation,
Yet ever to hope for redemption—

Perchance God will also hear my prayer and hearken to my cry,
And be to me a protecting shield,
For there is none to help or sustain me,
But God in Heaven.

Rabbi Jacob Cohen

I SEEK REFUGE IN THE LORD

I seek refuge in the Lord. I seek rest and peace for I am tossed by storms. I seek strength and courage, for I have lost hope. Days have come when only you, O God, can help me. Be with me when my days darken; when my toil seems vain, and my friends far away; when I am alone and have none but You.

I remember the words of old: "Seek me and live." Keep within me the thirst to know You, that I might ever seek You. Sorrow and disappointments have humbled me. Dear God, be near to the broken and contrite heart. I search for You; bring me to Your presence. None can aid but You; send me Your help. I trust in You forever.

Union Home Prayer Book, 1951

LIFE AND DEATH

To the living ---
Death is a wound. Its name is grief.
 Its companion is loneliness.
Whenever it comes -- whatever its guise,
When there are no tears --
Death is a wound.

But death belongs to life --
 as night belongs to day
 as darkness belongs to light
 as shadows belong to substance --
As the fallen leaf to the tree,
 Death belongs to life.

It is not our purpose to live forever.
 It is only our purpose to live.
It is no added merit that a person lives long.
 It is of merit only that one's life is good.

*Alvin I. Fine
American poet*

SHALL I CRY OUT IN ANGER?

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 moments of laughter,
The seasons of joy, the days of gladness and
festivity?

*When 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.*

They have led me into the wide universe
I continue to inhabit, and their presence
Is more vital to me than their absence.

*What You give, O Lord, You do not take
And bounties once granted
Shed their radiance evermore.*

Within me Your love and vision,
Now woven deep into the texture of my being,
Live and will be mine forever.

Rabbi Morris Adler (1906-1966)

ECCLESIASTES 3

For everything there is a season,
 And a time for every desire under heaven:
A time to be born and a time to die;
 A time to plant and a time to uproot what has been planted;
A time to tear down and a time to build up;
 A time to weep and a time to laugh;
A time to grieve and a time to dance;
 A time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones;
A time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
 A time to seek and a time to lose;
A time to keep and a time to give away;
 A time to rend and a time to mend;
A time to keep silence and a time to speak;
 A time to love and a time to hate;
A time for war and a time for peace.

A MAN IN HIS LIFE

A man doesn't have time in his life
 to have time for everything.
 He doesn't have seasons enough to have
 a season for every purpose.
 Ecclesiastes was wrong about that.

A man needs to love and to hate at the same moment,
 to laugh and cry with the same eyes,
 with the same hands to throw stones and gather them,
 to make love in war and war in love.
 And to hate and forgive and remember and forget,
 to arrange and confuse, to eat and to digest
 what history takes years and years to do.

A man doesn't have time.
 When he loses he seeks, when he finds he forgets, when he
 forgets he loves
 when he loves he begins to forget.

Yehuda Amichai, Israeli Poet

YIZKOR

Yours is no longer a face
that bounces before me
in the daily rhythm
of life touching life

*Yours is no longer a voice
humming through a current
filling my ear and heart
with personal travails*

Yours was a dwelling
I could easily seek
A spur of the moment
sharing and then passing on

*In busy times we met by design
When can you?
When can we?
Just a spurt in the river of time*

A common ground once was ours
a daily rhythm
a twining of lives
Our events, our circle, our world

*The giving of life
Has dashed and ended
All days of nearness
The smiles now stretch into oblivion*

Yet just as the winds of change
Continue to blow
Across the sea
I remember you

*Sheila J. Randall
Congregant*

PSALM 121

אָשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל-הַהָרִים, מֵאֵין יְבוֹא עֲזָרִי? עֲזָרִי מֵעַם
 יְיָ, עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ. אֶל-יָתֵן לְמוֹט רַגְלִי, אֶל-יָנוּם
 שְׁמֶרְךָ. הִנֵּה לֹא-יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל. יְיָ
 שְׁמֶרְךָ, יְיָ צִלְךָ עַל-יַד יְמִינֶךָ. יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁשֶׁשׁ לֹא-
 יִכָּבֶה, וַיָּרֶחַ בַּלַּיְלָה. יְיָ יִשְׁמְרְךָ מִכָּל-רָע, יִשְׁמֹר אֶת-
 נַפְשְׁךָ. יְיָ יִשְׁמֹר-צִאתְךָ וּבֹאֶךָ, מֵעַתָּה וְעַד-עוֹלָם.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
 From whence cometh my help.
 My help cometh from the Lord,
 Which made heaven and earth.
 He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;
 He that keepeth thee will not slumber.
 Behold, he that keepeth Israel
 Shall neither slumber nor sleep.
 The Lord is thy keeper;
 The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.
 The sun shall not smite thee by day,
 Nor the moon by night.
 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil;
 He shall preserve thy soul.
 The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in
 From this time forth, and even for evermore.

O God, Author of life and death, our wisdom is small, our vision short. One by one our companions, passing along the road of life, disappear from our view. We know that each must walk the same path to the doorway of the grave. We strain to see what lies beyond the gate, but all is darkness to our mortal sight.

Yet even the darkness is not too dark for You, O God, but the night shines as the day.

You have created us in Your image and made us share in Your enduring righteousness. You have put eternity into our hearts, have implanted within us a vision of life everlasting. This hope we cherish in humility and faith, trusting in Your endless goodness and Your wondrous love.

Into Your hands we commit the spirits of our dear ones, for You keep faith with Your children in death as in life.

Sustain us, O God, that we may meet with calm serenity the dark mysteries that lie ahead, knowing that when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, You are with us, a living Friend in whom we put our trust; You are the light of our life, our hope in eternity.

From PSALM 90

אֲדֹנִי, מֵעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָנוּ בְּדֹר וָדֹר. בְּטָרֶם הָרִים
יֵלְדוּ, וְתַחֲלִיל אֶרֶץ וְתַבֵּל, וּמַעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה
אֵל.

Eternal God, You have been our refuge in all generations.

*Before the mountains were born, or earth and universe
brought forth, from eternity to eternity You are God.*

כִּי אֵלֶּף שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ כְּיוֹם אֶתְמוֹל כִּי יַעֲבֹר,
וְאִשְׁמוּרָה בְּלִילָה. וְרַמָּתָם; שָׁנָה יְהִיו; בְּבֹקֶר כְּחֹצִיר
יִחַלֵּף: בְּבֹקֶר יִצֵּץ וְחֹלֶף, לָעָרֶב יְמוּלֵל וַיָּבֶשׁ.

For a thousand years in Your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as
a watch in the night.

*You sweep us away; we are like a dream at daybreak; we come and
go like grass which in the morning shoots up, renewed, and in the
evening fades and withers.*

יְמֵי-שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ כָּהֶם שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה, וְאִם בְּגִבּוֹרָת,
שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה; וְרַהֲבָם עָמַל וְאָוֶן, כִּי-גֹז חִישׁ, וְנִעְפָּה.
לְמִנּוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע, וְנִבְיֵא לִבֵּב חֲכָמָה. יִרְאֶה אֵל-
עֲבָדֶיךָ פָּעֻלֶיךָ, וְהִדְרֶךָ עַל-בְּנֵיהֶם.

The number of our years may be many or few; yet vain toil fills their span,
for it is soon ended, and we fly away. So teach us to number our days that
we may grow wise in heart.

*Let Your servants understand Your ways, and Your children see
Your glory.*

וַיְהִי נָעַם אֲדֹנִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ, וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה
עָלֵינוּ. וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהוּ!

Let the beauty of our Eternal God be with us, and may our work have lasting
value.

O let the work of our hands be enduring!

IT IS A FEARFUL THING

It is a fearful thing
to love
what death can touch.

A fearful thing
to love,
to hope, to dream
to be

to be,
and to lose.

A thing for fools, this,
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 painful joy.

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

Judy Chicago
American artist and poet

I LOST A MEMBER OF MY FAMILY

I lost a member of my family.
A grandfather, a grandmother,
 a sister, son and brother.
I lost my father, my mother,
 my English cousin, my Japanese daughter.
I lost a member of my family,
 my Israeli every man,
 my American every woman,
 my family,
 extended, nuclear and
 everything is immediate.
I have veiled my mirrors,
 removed my leather shoes,
 said Kaddish nearly six thousand times
 said Kaddish six million times
I have lost a member of my family
I will sit Shiva seven days
I will grieve forever.

Jerri Chaplin
American poet

MOURNER'S KADDISH FOR EVERYDAY

Build me up of memory
 loving and angry, tender and honest.
Let my loss build me a heart of wisdom,
 compassion for the world's many losses.

Each hour is mortal
 and each hour is eternal
 and each hour is our testament.
May I create worthy memories
 all the days of my life.

Debra Cash

PSALM 23

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד. יְיָ רֹעִי, לֹא אֶחְסָר. בְּנֵאוֹת דְּשָׁא
 יִרְבִּיצֵנִי, עַל־מֵי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי. נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב. יִנְחֵנִי
 בְּמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ. גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגֵיא צִלְמוֹת
 לֹא־אִירָא רָע, כִּי־אֵתָה עִמָּדִי; שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֶנְתְּךָ
 הִמָּה יִנְחֲמֵנִי. תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֶגְדַּי צִרְרֵי. דִּשְׁנֹת
 בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי, כּוֹסֵי רְנִיָּה. אֵךְ טוֹב וַחֲסֹד יִרְדְּפוּנִי
 כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי, וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְיָ לְאָרְךָ יָמִים.

*Eternal God, You are my shepherd, I shall not want.
 You make me lie down in green pastures.
 You lead me beside still waters. You restore my soul.
 You lead me in right paths for the sake of Your name.
 Even when I walk in the valley of the shadow of death,
 I shall fear no evil, for You are with me.
 With rod and staff You comfort me.
 You have set a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
 You have anointed my head with oil, my cup overflows.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the Eternal God forever.*

PSALM 16

שׁוֹיִתִּי יְיָ לְנֶגְדִי תָמִיד, כִּי
 מִיָּמִינִי בֶל-אַמוּט. לִבִּי שָׂמַח
 לְבִי נִיגַל כְּבוֹדִי, אֶף-בְּשָׂרִי
 יִשְׁכַּן לִבִּי. כִּי לֹא-תַעְזֹב
 נַפְשִׁי לְשָׂאוֹל, לֹא-תִתֵּן
 חֲסִידְךָ לְרֹאוֹת שְׁחָת.
 תוֹדִיעֵנִי אֶרֶח חַיִּים, שְׁבַע
 שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ,
 נְעֻמוֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ נִצַּח.

I have set the Eternal always before me; God is at my side, I shall not be moved. Therefore does my heart exult and my soul rejoice; my being is secure. For You will not abandon me to death nor let Your faithful ones see destruction. You show me the path of life; Your presence brings fullness of joy; enduring happiness is Your gift.

If some messenger were to come to us with the offer that death should be overthrown, but with the one inseparable condition that birth should also cease; if the existing generation were given the chance to live forever, but on the clear understanding that never again would there be a child, or a youth, or first love, never again new persons with new hopes, new ideas, new achievements, ourselves for always and never any others—could the answer be in doubt?

We shall not fear the summons of death; we shall remember those who have gone before us and those who will come after us!

“Alas for those who cannot sing, but die with all their music in them.” Let us treasure the time we have and resolve to use it well, counting each moment precious—a chance to apprehend some truth, to experience some beauty, to conquer some evil, to relieve some suffering, to love and be loved, to achieve something of lasting worth.

Help us, Lord, to fulfill the promise that is in each of us, and so to conduct ourselves that, generations hence, it will be true to say of us: The world is better because, for a brief space, they lived in it.

Give sorrow words;
the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart
and bids it break.

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth clear.

Henry Vaughan, *Silex Scintillans*

No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main....Any man's death diminishes me because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

John Donne, *Meditation 17*, 1623

When you are sorrowful
look into your heart
and you shall see that
you are weeping
for that which has been
your delight

Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet*

THE THING IS

The thing is
to love life
to love it even when you have no stomach for it,
when everything you've held dear crumbles like burnt paper
in your hands
and your throat is filled with the silt of it.

When grief sits with you so heavily it is like heat, tropical, moist,
thickening the air so it's heavy like water,
more fit for gills than lungs.

When grief weights you like your own flesh
only more of it, an obesity of grief.

How long can a body withstand this, you think,
and yet you hold life like a face between your palms,
a plain face, with no charming smile or twinkle in her eye,
and you say, yes, I will take you, I will love you, again.

Ellen Bass

THE SHIP

I am standing upon the seashore. A ship, at my side, spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean. She is an object of beauty and strength. I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone." Gone where? Gone from my sight. That is all. She is just as large in mast, hull and spar as she was when she left my side. And, she is just as able to bear her load of living freight to her destined port. Her diminished size is in me -- not in her. And, just at the moment when someone says, "There, she is gone," there are other eyes watching her coming, and other voices ready to take up the glad shout, "Here she comes!" And that is dying...

Harry Van Dyke

When Moses conversed with god, he asked, "Lord, where shall I seek you?"

God answered, "Among the brokenhearted."

Moses continued, "But, Lord, no heart could be more despairing than mine."

And God replied, "Then I am where you are."

Abu'l Fayd Al-Misri

Let man beware against going forth upon his journeyings alone. That is to say, let him obey the Divine Will so that he shall not go forth without the accompanying Presence of God—which will sustain him and deliver him in every hour of need.

Zohar (Book of Splendor). I,459

THE EYE IS NEVER SATISFIED

The eye is never satisfied with seeing; endless are the desires of the heart. We devise new schemes on the graves of a thousand disappointed hopes. Like Moses on Mount Nebo, we behold the promised land from afar but may not enter it.

Our life, at its best, is an endless effort for a goal we never attain. Death finally terminates the struggle, and joy and grief, success and failure, all are ended.

Like children falling asleep over their toys, we relinquish our grasp on earthly possessions only when death overtakes us.

Wise and simple, strong and weak, rich and poor, all are equal in death. The grave levels all distinctions and makes the whole world kin.

O God, who art Master of life and death, we know how limited is our wisdom, how short our vision. One by one the children of men, passing along the road of life, disappear from view. We know that each of us must walk the same path to the doorway of the grave. We strain our eyes to see what lies beyond the gate, but all is darkness to our mortal sight. Yet even the darkness of death is not too dark for Thee, O God, but the night shineth as the day, the darkness is even as the light. Thou hast created us in Thine image and hast made us share in Thine enduring righteousness. Thou hast out eternity into our hearts, hast implanted within us a vision of life everlasting. This hope we cherish in humility and faith, trusting in Thine endless goodness and Thy wondrous love. Into Thy gracious hands we commit the spirits of our dear ones who are gone from this earth, assured that Thou keepest faith with Thy children in death as in life. Sustain us, O God, that we may meet, with calm serenity, the dark mysteries that lie ahead, knowing that when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, Thou art with us. Thou art our loving Father, in Thee we put our trust; Thou art the light of our life, our hope in eternity.

Union Prayer Book, 1962

Birth is a beginning and death is a destination. And life is a journey:

From childhood to maturity and youth to age;

From innocence to awareness and ignorance to knowing;

From foolishness to discretion and then, perhaps, to wisdom;

From weakness to strength or strength to weakness—and, often, back again;

From health to sickness and back, we pray, to health again;

From offense to forgiveness, From loneliness to love,

From joy to gratitude, From pain to compassion,

And grief to understanding—from fear to faith;

From defeat to defeat to defeat—Until, looking backward or ahead,

We see victory lies not at some high place along the way,

But in having made the journey, stage by stage, a sacred pilgrimage.

Birth is a beginning and death is a destination.

And life is a journey: a sacred pilgrimage—to life everlasting.

Alvin I. Fine

AGAIN AND AGAIN

Again and again, however we know the landscape
of love and the little graveyard there, with its
sorrowing names, and the frighteningly silent
abyss into which the others fall: again and again
the two of us walk out together under the ancient
trees, lie down again and again among the flowers,
face to face with the sky.

Rainer Maria Rilke

THE GIFT OF MEMORY

The gift of memory is very precious:
 it helps us taste the pleasures of life long after
they have passed our lips;
 it brings back the dear features of those gone
for a while;
 it preserves us from the superficialities of today
and the airiness of tomorrow by giving us the
depth and weight of yesterday;
 it tempers the onrush of the present, and the
allure of the future, by the wise whispers of the
past.

David Lefkowitz

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT SOW

Blessed are they that sow and shall not reap
For they wander far.

Blessed are they that freely give all that they have,
The glory of their youth has made the sunlight richer
And they threw away the medals at the crossroads.

Blessed are they whose pride brims over their banks
And becomes white and humble
When the rainbow raises its arch in the clouds.

Blessed are they that know their hearts cry out in the wilderness,
Silence flowers on their lips.

Blessed, blessed are they, they shall be gathered to the heart of the world,
Warm in the coat of forgetfulness,
Eternal silence their offering
And their reward.

Avraham Ben Yitzhak (1883—1950)
Translated by Robert Mezey

REMEMBERING

Sometimes I can't remember your voice.
My heart and soul cry out in fear –
How could I forget such a part of you?

Sometimes I can't remember what day you died.
My heart and soul cry out in pain –
How could I ever forget the day you left me?

But I do remember your kindness –
I remember your gentleness –
I remember your goodness –
Trying to teach me to do good.

And my heart and soul sing to heaven
Remembering you.

Paula Yablonsky
Congregant

MEDITATION ON MEMORY AND LOVE

The earth has covered only that which was mortal
of those to whom we have said our farewell.

We shall not see the familiar glowing face, the warm, illuminated eye,
nor hear the beloved voice.

We shall not sit face to face across the family table, or side by side
in the home of a friend, or in worship.

We shall not feel the kiss that once evoked our deepest response.

Yet death has failed and must surrender.

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.

Rather, the beloved has become a presence—indwelling and
inseparable, rooted so deep that life cannot carry us far from the
cherished now hallowed center of memory and love.

Your hand, Death, has been stayed.

You can no longer afflict oblivion or doom to full disappearance
those who were the light of our life.

They live and move within us in spheres beyond your dominion.

We thank You, God of life and love, for the resurrecting gift of memory.
which endows Your children, fashioned in Your image,

with Godlike sovereign power to give immortality through love.

Blessed be You, God, who enables Your children to remember.

There are stars up above,
 so far away we only see their light
 long, long after the star itself is gone.
And so it is with people that we loved—
 their memories keep shining ever brightly
 though their time with us is done.
But the stars that light up the darkest night,
 these are the lights that guide us.
As we live our days, these are the ways we remember.

Mishkan T'filah

AFTER GLOW

I'd like the memory of me
 to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow
 of smiles when life is done.

I'd like to leave an echo
 whispering softly down the ways,
Of happy times and laughing times
 and bright and sunny days.

I'd like the tears of those who grieve
 to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave
 when life is done.

Carol Mirkel

NOT IN TIME

I shall not return
To dear past places
Or be again
With those who shared my days,

But I will pass
Into lives unborn
Not through these words,
But we who have been

Sing in young hearts, this, this
Is your long-lost love
Whom you have known
Always, through our desire
To gaze on a remembered face.

Kathleen Raine
(sung at the Singer concert, March 15, 2009)

MY BELOVED'S NAME

The mention of my beloved's name may bring tears to my eyes,
but it never fails to bring music to my ears.

If you are really my friend,
let me hear the melody of his name.
It soothes my broken heart and sings to my soul.

Nancy Williams

The heart hath its own memory, like the mind. And in it are enshrined
the precious keepsakes, into which is wrought the giver's loving
thought.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

DEATH IS NOTHING AT ALL

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away into the next room.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other,
that we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name.
Speak to me in the easy way
which you always used.
Put no difference in your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word
that it always was.
Let it be spoken without affect,
without the trace of a shadow on it.

Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same that it ever was.
There is absolutely unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?

I am waiting for you,
for an interval,
somewhere very near,
just around the corner.

All is well.

Henry Scott Holland

EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE, COMFORT, AND ACCEPTANCE

25

AND IF I GO

And if I go, while you're still here...
know that I live on,
vibrating to a different measure
behind a thin veil you cannot see through.
You will not see me,
so you must have faith.
*I wait for the time when
we can soar together again,
both aware of each other.*
Until then, live your life to the fullest
and when you need me,
just whisper my name in your heart,
...I will be there.

Emily Dickinson

FEAR NOT DEATH

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

Death is better than a life of pain, and eternal rest than constant sickness.

Seek not to understand what is too difficult for you, search not for what is hidden from you, for you have been shown more than you can understand.

As a drop of water in the sea, as a grain of sand on the shore are man's few days in eternity. The good things in life last for limited days, but a good name endures forever.

O God, You redeem our souls from the grave, You are the Rock of our salvation. Forsake us not in time of trouble, in days of distress and desolation. Help us to endure, O God, for we have placed our hope in You.

Ben Sira

SONNET 2 FROM *THE AUTUMN SONNETS*

If I can let you go as trees let go
 their leaves, so casually, one by one;
If I can come to know what they do know...
That fall is the release, the consummation,
Then fear of time and the uncertain fruit
 would not distemper the great lucid skies,
This strangest autumn, mellow and acute.

If I can take the dark with open eyes
 and call it seasonal, not harsh or strange,
 (for love itself may need a time of sleep),
And, treelike, stand unmoved before the change,
 lose what I lose to keep what I can keep,
The strong root still alive under the snow,
Love will endure—if I can let you go.

May Sarton

DO NOT STAND BY MY GRAVE AND WEEP

Do not stand by my grave and weep,
I am not there, I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow
I am the diamond glint on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awake in the morning hush,
I am the swift, uplifting rush
 of quiet birds in circling flight.
I am the soft starshine at night.

Do not stand by my grave and cry.
I am not there,
I did not die.

Mary Elizabeth Frye

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
And all the season of snows and sins;
The days dividing lover and lover,
The light that loses, the night that wins;
And time remembered is grief forgotten,
And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
And in green underwood and cover
Blossom by blossom the spring begins.

Algernon Charles Swinburne

In one of the stars, I shall be living.
In one of them, I shall be laughing.
And so it will be as if all the stars were laughing
When you look at the sky at night.

Antoine de Saint-Exupery, *The Little Prince*

Dreams never die; if they have ever blossomed in the heart of man, they
accompany him forever, and after death their echo lingers on.

Jacob Fichman

What we have once enjoyed we can never lose.
All that we love deeply becomes a part of us.

Helen Keller

HOLD ON

Hold on to what is good
 Even if it's a handful of earth.
Hold on to what you believe
 Even if it's a tree that stands by itself.
Hold on to what you must do
 Even if it's a long way from here.
Hold on to your life
 Even if it's easier to let go.
Hold onto my hand
 Even when I've gone away from you.

Native American traditional prayer

When I die, give what's left of me away
 to children and old men that wait to die.
And if you need to cry,
 cry for your brother walking the street beside you.
And when you need me, put your arms around anyone
 and give them what you need to give me.

I want to leave you something,
 something better than words or sounds.
Look for me in the people I've known and loved,
 and if you cannot give me away,
 at least let me live in your eyes and not in your mind.

You can love me best by letting hands touch hands,
 and by letting go of children that need to be free.
Love doesn't die, people do.
So when all that's left of me is love,
 give me away.

Merritt Maloy

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO DIED
IN THE HOLOCAUST AND THOSE LOST
THROUGH ACTS OF WAR OR VIOLENCE

29

THE BUTTERFLY

The last, the very last,
So richly, brightly, dazzlingly yellow.
Perhaps if the sun's tears would sing
against a white stone ...

Such, such a yellow
Is carried lightly 'way up high.
It went away I'm sure because it wished
To kiss the world goodbye.

For seven weeks I've lived in here,
Pinned up inside this ghetto
But I have found my people here.
The dandelions call to me
And the white chestnut candles in the court.
Only I never saw another butterfly.

That butterfly was the last one.
Butterflies don't live here,
In the ghetto.

Pavel Friedmann (1921-1929)
Theresienstadt Concentration Camp

O THE CHIMNEYS

*And though after my skin worms destroy this body,
yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

Job, 19:26

O the chimneys
On the ingeniously devised habitations of death
When Israel's body drifted as smoke
Through the air --
Was welcomed by a star, a chimney sweep,
A star that turned black
Or was it a ray of sun?

O the chimneys!
Freedomway for Jeremiah and Job's dust --
Who devised you and laid stone upon stone
The road for refugees of smoke?

O the habitations of death,
Invitingly appointed
For the host who used to be a guest --
O you fingers
Laying the threshold
Like a knife between life and death --

O you chimneys,
O you fingers
And Israel's body as smoke through the air!

*Nelly Sachs (1891-1970)
German poet*

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 in our memory a wound that does not heal. A hundred generation of victims and martyrs; still their blood cries out from the earth. And so many, so many at Dachau, at Buchenwald, at Babi Yar . . .

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 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 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.

Rabbi Chaim Stern and Rabbi Henry Cohen

O Lord of life, our times are in your hand. One generation comes into the world to be blessed with days of peace and safety; another goes through the valley of the shadow enduring the cruelties of persecution and war. Heartbreaking have been the times that have fallen to our lot, O God. We have lived through years of tyranny and destruction; we are schooled in sorrow and acquainted with grief. We have seen the just defeated, the innocent driven from their homes, and the righteous suffer a martyrdom as merciless as any ages have witnessed. At this hour of memorial we recall with grief all your children who have perished through the cruelty of the oppressor, victims of demonic hate: the aged and young, the learned and unlettered—all driven in multitudes along the road of pain and pitiless death. Their very presence on earth was begrudged them, for they brought your covenant of mercy and justice to the recollection of your enemies; they perished because they were a symbol of Your eternal law; their death has brought darkness to the human soul.

They lie in nameless graves, in far-off forests and lonely fields. And the substance of many was scattered by the winds to the earth's four corners. Yet they shall not be forgotten. We take them into our hearts and give them a place beside the cherished memories of our own loved ones. They now are ours.

We pray to You, O Source of mercy, that Your Torah, to which these Your children bore witness in life and in death, may come to glow with a renewed light in the human soul,' that, remembering them, we may sanctify Your name in all the world. Thus will their memory become an enduring blessing to all Your children.

Gates of Repentance

WE REMEMBER

Remember our people who suffered and died so that we could be free and secure; may their memory be more than a distant shadow.

For their dreams left unfulfilled and lives taken too soon: we remember.

Remember our brothers and sisters whose sacrifice kept the dream of democracy and justice alive; may their courage be our inspiration and strength.

For life cut short and vision unrealized: we remember.

Remember the fallen of our armed services, the victims of terror and tragedy; may the darkness of their loss not obscure the light of peace. They were in love with our land and in love with life.

For the agony, the tears, the mothers and the fathers, for the children who were and for the children yet to be: we remember.

Mishkan T'filah

We remember with sorrow those whom death has taken from our midst during the past year ...

Taking these dear ones into our hearts with all our beloved, we recall them now with reverence.

YIZKOR PRAYER

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים נְשָׁמַת בְּנֵי הָאָהוּב מִחֵמֶר עֵינֵי שְׁהֶלֶךְ לְעוֹלָמוֹ.
הִנְנִי נוֹדֵר (נוֹדֶרֶת) צְדָקָה בְּעֵד הַזְכָּרַת נְשָׁמָתוֹ. אָנָּה תְּהִי
נַפְשׁוֹ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים וְתִהְיֶה מְנוּחָתוֹ כְּבוֹד, שְׁבַע
שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת-פָּנָיו, נְעִימוֹת בִּימִינָךְ נִצַּח. אָמֵן.

In memory of a father:

The memory of my dear father envelops me at this solemn hour. His love and support sustained me. May I be worthy of his name. May his rest be peaceful forever more.

In memory of a mother:

The memory of my dear mother shines within me. The bond which united us can never be severed. The gift of life and the tender love she bestowed upon me are mine forever. May I be worthy of her. May God grant her eternal peace.

In memory of a husband or wife:

In this solemn hour I remember you, my beloved. Deep bonds of love are not dissolved; they are strong in death as in life. Though you are no longer with me, the memory of our companionship strengthens me. May God keep you and grant you peace eternal.

In memory of a partner:

In this solemn hour I remember you, my beloved companion, my partner in life. Our deep bonds of love are not dissolved. Though we faced many challenges together, our love and faith kept us strong. The memory of our life and the love we shared comfort me. May God keep you and grant you peace.

In memory of a child:

The wound of your loss never heals, my beloved child. I remember the sweetness of the years you were with us and the beautiful dreams we shared of the future. Although you are gone, remembrance of you will never leave my heart. May God always grant you peace and eternal rest, and may your memory shine within me forever.

In memory of a brother or sister:

Your memory is always with me. Your companionship warmed our growing up and enriched our years. The life we shared with our family was a tapestry torn apart when you were taken from us. May God keep you and bless you and grant you peace.

In memory of friends:

May God remember forever my dear friends who have gone to their eternal rest. Their lives brought joy and love to my life, enriching the daily journey we traveled together. May they be as one with the One who is life eternal, and may they rest in peace.

* * * * *

O Lord of life, bless the memories we cherish. On this day that more than any other affords us glimpses of eternity, may the sorrows we have known be softened by our sense of Your infinite wisdom, Your unending love, Your eternal presence.

May the pains of past bereavements grow more gentle; indeed, let them be transformed into gratitude to our dear ones who have died and tenderness to those who are still with us.

All rise

אֵל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים, הַמַּצֵּא מְנוּחָה
נְכוֹנָה תַּחַת כְּנָפֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה עִם קְרוֹשִׁים וְטְהוֹרִים
בְּזֶהר הָרָקִיעַ מְזַהֲרִים לְנִשְׁמוֹת יְקִירֵינוּ שֶׁהָלְכוּ
לְעוֹלָמָם. בְּעַל הָרַחֲמִים יִסְתִּירם בְּסֶתֶר כְּנָפָיו
לְעוֹלָמִים, וְיַצְרֹר בְּצִרּוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת־נִשְׁמָתָם. יי
הוּא נִחְלָתָם. וְיִנְחוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל מְשַׁכְּבָם, וְנֹאמַר:
אָמֵן.

O God full of compassion, Eternal Spirit of
the universe, grant perfect rest under the
wings of Your Presence to our loved ones
who have entered eternity. Master of
Mercy, let them find refuge forever in the
shadow of Your wings, and let their souls
be bound up in the bond of eternal life.
The Eternal God is their inheritance. May
they rest in peace, and let us say: Amen.

All are seated

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 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 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 are lost and sick at heart,
we remember them.*

When we have joys we yearn 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 theirs,
we remember them.

*So long as we live, they too shall live,
for they are now a part of us, as
we remember them.*

Adapted from
Rabbi Roland B. Gittlesohn

KADDISH

It is a prayer that is said in Aramaic, not in Hebrew. It is a prayer that makes no mention of the dead. And yet Kaddish is one of the prayers that has the strongest hold on Jews...

It is a kind of benediction, a last "good word" before ending the service so people will go home feeling uplifted. The words remind us of what we came together to do—namely, praise God—and they encourage us to look forward to the establishment of God's kingdom, when there will be completion, peace.

Bernard Lipnick,
"A Commentary on the Kaddish"

WHEN DEATH COMES

When death comes to the person you love,
you will go down to darkness and despair
and in the depths of loneliness will find
your naked soul, craven and cold.

You whose mind has considered and doubted,
whose heart has faltered and whose courage has failed,
will wring out the final personal word
from your stricken soul.

And death has no truth but this: I believe.
death has no victory but this:
to rise from doubt and cold darkness
to magnify and hallow the name of God.

Ruth Brin

INTRODUCTION TO THE KADDISH

When a soldier in the forces of a ruler of flesh and blood falls,
That ruler hardly knows that one is missing.
If a soldier is slain, there are others to replace that one.

But our Ruler, the Creator of the Universe,
The Holy One, Who is to be blessed,
Desires life, loves peace and pursues peace;
When one of Israel is missing,
A diminishing and lessening takes place;
There is a decline of strength.
Therefore we pray after the death of each Jew,
Yitgadal v'yitkadah sh'may raba,

May the Power of the Name be magnified,
And may no lessening of power come to the Holy One
Who is blessed and sanctified,
In the world which was created according to the Holy Will.

Therefore, O sisters and brothers of the whole house of Israel,
All you who participate in the mourning,
Let us turn our hearts to the Holy One,
The Ruler and Redeemer of Israel.
And pray—for ourselves—and for our Creator as well:
That we may be worthy to live and see with our very eyes,

Oseh shalom bi-m'romav
Hu ya-aseh shalom aleynu v'al kol Yisrael.
That the One, who mercifully makes peace in the heavens,
Will make peace for us, and for all Israel.
And let us say: Amen.

Adapted from the poem by S. Y. Agnon

It is hard to sing of oneness when the 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 hearts and words, and what they did is part of what we have become.

We do our best homage to our dead when we live our lives more 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.

Richard Levy

All rise

MOURNER'S KADDISH

קדיש יתום

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעָלְמָא דִּי-בְרָא
כְּרַעוּתָהּ, וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי
דְּכָל-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעֶגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yit-ga-dal ve-yit-ka-dash she-mei ra-ba be-al-ma di-ve-ra
chi-re-u-tei, ve-yam-lich mal-chu-tei be-cha-yei-chon
u-ve-yo-mei-chon u-ve-cha-yei de-chol beit Yis-ra-eil, ba-a-ga-la
u-vi-ze-man ka-riv, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Ye-hei she-mei ra-ba me-va-rach le-a-lam u-le-al-mei al-ma-ya.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא,
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא, בְּרִיף
הוּא, לְעָלָא מִן כָּל-בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא, תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא
וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yit-ba-rach ve-yish-ta-bach, ve-yit-pa-ar ve-yit-ro-mam
ve-yit-na-sei, ve-yit-ha-dar ve-yit-a-leh ve-yit-ha-lal she-mei
de-ku-de-sha, be-rich hu, le-ei-la min kol bi-re-cha-ta ve-shi-ra-ta,
tush-be-cha-ta ve-ne-che-ma-ta, da-a-mi-ran be-al-ma, ve-i-me-ru:
a-mein.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן-שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל-כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Ye-hei she-la-ma ra-ba min she-ma-ya ve-cha-yim a-lei-nu ve-al
kol Yis-ra-eil, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמֵרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

O-seh sha-lom bi-me-ro-mav, hu ya-a-seh sha-lom a-lei-nu ve-al
kol Yis-ra-eil, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

Let the glory of God be extolled, let His great name be hallowed in the world whose creation He willed. May His kingdom soon prevail, in our own day, our own lives, and the life of all Israel, and let us say: Amen.

Let God's great name be blessed forever and ever. Let the name of the Holy One, be glorified, exalted, and honored, though God is beyond all praises, songs, and adorations that we can utter, and let us say: Amen.

For us and for all Israel, may the blessing of peace and the promise of life come true, and let us say: Amen.

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

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort to all who are bereaved.

Amen.

All are seated

THERE IS A GRACE

There is a grace that every dawn renews,
A loveliness making every morning fresh.
We will endure, we will prevail –
We, the children of Hope,
Children of the One
Who crowds the heavens with stars,
Endows the earth with glory,
And fills the mind with wonder!

Rabbi Chaim Stern (1930-2001)

TAKE TIME

Take time to talk,
for you may ask of all things
unknown to you.

Take time to laugh,
for smiles relinquish sorrow
and spread happiness.

Take time to think,
for the realm of knowledge
is never ending.

Take time to see,
for there is beauty
in every part of the world around you.

Take time to live,
for each day is filled with new opportunities
that will be gone tomorrow.

Take time to dream,
for survival is forever challenging
the powers of your imagination.

Take time to love,
for the sharing of all these things
is the miracle of life.

Cathy Zinke



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