

THE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE

Lighting the  
יזכור *Yizkor* Candle

YOM KIPPUR • 5781 | 2020

יום כיפור

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For over a millennium it has been a Jewish custom to honor the memory of loved ones with a memorial light five times during the year, on:

- The **יהרצית** *yahrzeit* (anniversary of the death)
- The three festivals (**פסח** *Pesach*, **שבועות**, *Shavuot* and **תורה-שמחת תורה** *Shmini Atzeret/Simchat Torah*)
- **יום כיפור** *Yom Kippur*

Seeing the light we are reminded of the words of Proverbs (20:27) *ner Adonai nishmat adam* – **נר יי נשמת אדם** –  
“The soul of a person is the lamp of God.”

Before *Yom Kippur* it is appropriate to light this candle the hour or so before sunset, or just after the final meal before you begin your fast and prior to lighting the *Yom Kippur* candles (which are lit after the meal as lighting them indicates the fast day has begun).

If you are blessed to not have suffered the loss of an immediate relative, we encourage you to light the candle for the many who died in the **שואה** *Shoah* (Holocaust) or other times of oppression, or for the many during this last difficult year who sadly died without loved ones at their side.

Finally, the **קדיש יתום** *Mourner's Kaddish* is purposely not included here as this is a prayer that our traditions say needs to be uttered in a community, surrounded (even if not physically, then spiritually) by others who are grieving and so many who have found a path through their pain to live with hope for better days ahead. We pray that the memory of your loved ones are ever a blessing.

Irwin Zeplovitz  
Rabbi

Jade Sank Ross  
Rabbi

Claire Franco  
Cantor

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## PSALM 23

God. You are my Shepherd, I shall not want.  
You make me lie down in green pastures,  
You lead me beside the still waters,  
You restore my soul;  
You guide me in straight paths for Your Name's sake,  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for You are with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me ...  
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life;  
And I will dwell in the house of the Eternal forever.

## PSALM 23

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד יְהוָה רֹעִי לֹא אֶחְסֶה. בְּנֵאֻת דָּשָׁא  
יִרְבִּיצֵנִי עַל־מֵי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי. נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב יִנְחֵנִי  
בְּמַעְגְלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ. גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶּךְ בְּגֵיא  
צַלְמוֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אֶתָּה עִמָּדִי שְׁבֹטְךָ  
וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתֶךָ הַמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי. תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלַחַן נֹגֵד  
צִרְרֵי דִשְׁנֹת. בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רוּיָהּ. אֵף טוֹב  
וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי. כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה  
לְאָרְךָ יָמִים.

תהילים כ"ג

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## MEDITATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

To ask of death that it never come is futile,  
but it is not futility to pray  
that when death comes for us,  
it may take us from a world one corner  
of which is a little better because we were there.

– Rabbi Jacob P. Rudin

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 stars are the lights that guide us.

– Hana Senesh

Blessed are those who give meaning to our lives;  
holy and precious is the example they leave behind.  
We pray:  
May our sorrows diminish as we recall their strength.  
May their wisdom protect us and help us to live.  
Let our grief be transformed  
into tenderness toward those who are still with us.

**בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי מְקוֹר חַיִּים**

*Baruch atah, Adonai, m'kor hachayim.*

Blessed are You, Holy One, who gives and renews life.

When we ask God to remember the souls of our departed at *Yizkor*, we request more than a mere mental act. We pray implicitly that by focusing on our loved ones' souls, God will take action on their behalf and save them from whatever pain they may be suffering, wherever they may be. At the same time, the implication is that this act of remembrance also constitutes a guarantee of Jewish continuity--well beyond just those we remember, and far beyond us as well. In remembering and in asking for God's remembrance, we request divine help in continuing our people's trajectory beyond ourselves, to achieve the ultimate aims of our people's history. *Yizkor* is, in the end, not a prayer for the dead, but a promise by the living.

– Rabbi Aaron Panken

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*Light the yizkor candle and say*

## אל מלא EL MALEI RACHAMIM

*For a man:*

*לזכר: אל מלא רחמים שוכן במרומים. המצא מנוחה נכונה תחת כנפי השכינה. במעלות קדושים וטהורים כזהר הרקיע מזהירים את נשמת [פלוני בן פלוני ופלונית] שהלך לעולמו. בגן עדן תהא מנוחתו. לכן בעל הרחמים יסתירהו בסתר כנפיו לעולמים. ויצרור בצרור החיים את נשמתו. יי הוא נחלתו: ויגוח בשלום על משכבו. ונאמר אמן*

God, full of compassion, dwelling on high, grant perfect rest under the wings of Your Presence, among the holy and pure, to the soul of \_\_\_\_\_, who has entered eternity. Compassionate One, gather him in the shelter of your wings; may his soul be bound up in the bond of life. Merciful God, be his inheritance; may he rest in peace, and let us say: Amen.

*For a woman:*

*לנקבה: אל מלא רחמים שוכן במרומים. המצא מנוחה נכונה תחת כנפי השכינה. במעלות קדושים וטהורים כזהר הרקיע מזהירים את נשמת [פלונית בת פלוני ופלונית] שהלכה לעולמה. בגן עדן תהא מנוחתה. לכן בעל הרחמים יסתירה בסתר כנפיו לעולמים. ויצרור בצרור החיים את נשמתה. יי הוא נחלתה: ויגוח בשלום על משכבה. ונאמר אמן*

God, full of compassion, dwelling on high, grant perfect rest under the wings of Your Presence, among the holy and pure, to the soul of \_\_\_\_\_, who has entered eternity. Compassionate One, gather her in the shelter of your wings; may her soul be bound up in the bond of life. Merciful God, be her inheritance; may she rest in peace, and let us say: Amen.

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The spark that lived inside the ones we love,  
unique and precious, beautiful and good,  
is theirs no more.  
Their light is ours; their radiance now burns in us,  
an eternal flame of memory.  
So we light candles, to keep our love alive,  
to bring their light into the world;  
A light unique and precious,  
ours to treasure, while we live;  
A *ner tamid* (eternal light)  
That lights our days  
Gives strength to endure and build  
Allows perspective  
Helps us appreciate loved ones with us even more  
And allows us to forgive, find hope and live a richer life.  
– Rabbi Irwin Zeplovitz

In love do I (we) remember them for blessing and whisper their names as an enduring benediction. May this time of reflection help me (us) dedicate my (our) own life (lives) to fulfill what these loved ones sought to achieve in their most noble moments. **זכרונם לברכה** *Zichronam livracha* ... may the memory of our dear ones ever be a blessing.

