

High Holidays 2020

Yizkor



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We are grateful for the efforts of Rabbi Amy Loewenthal for producing this excerpt in tandem with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association under the leadership of Rabbi Elyse Wechterman.

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KAVANOT FOR YIZKOR

KAVANAH. As we gather together for this solemn moment, we are touched by a horizontal connection, a circle of individuals reaching out to each other for comfort and nourishment as we each acknowledge our loss. We are also empowered by a vertical connection with those souls who have cherished the chain of tradition that stretches far back in time. We are all a part of that chain. By honoring it, both in its horizontal form and its vertical dimension, we are proclaiming our faith in its continuity. D.B.

KAVANAH. The essence of *Yizkor* is remembering. Some memories come in an almost overpowering rush, others drift into our consciousness much more gradually. We need time for remembering. Sometimes, the little things that gradually come to awareness only after we leave time for waiting, turn out to be the most precious and important of all. So quiet yourself, and listen to your heart murmuring. Now is the time for remembering.... D.A.T.

KAVANAH. Jewish tradition teaches that between the living and the dead there is a window, not a wall. The culture of scientific materialism teaches that after death, the links between us and our loved ones who died are forever ended—a brick wall! But, like the rituals of *Shiva*, *Kaddish*, and *Yahrzeit*, *Yizkor* opens windows to loved ones who are no longer with us. *Yizkor* creates a sacred space and time, wherein we can open our hearts and minds to the possibility of a genuine interconnection with beloved family members and friends who have left behind the world of the living. *Yizkor* is a window. Within the wellsprings of our infinite souls we find the window of connection between the living and the dead. Prepare to open that window....

As you recite *Yizkor* prayers, let your senses and imagination serve as the vehicle of interconnection. For whom are you saying *Yizkor* today? Can you imagine their faces before your eyes? See their smiles; visualize how they might be standing if they were next to you. Do you recall the sound of their voices? Hear their words as you stand in prayer. Feel their presence right in this moment. In your mind, in your heart, allow a conversation between you to unfold. What needs to be communicated this year? What's the message you need to hear today? What are the silent prayers of the heart? What remains unspoken? Speak. Listen. Take your time. There is no reason to hurry. This is a timeless moment. Let all the radiance of their love be with you right now. Simcha Paull Raphael

If only I could hold your face
If only I could wrap up the light in your eyes
and put it away
safekeeping

safekeeping

against mistaken words
against parting
old age

against all human loneliness

We say that love has no beginning and no end
We know such love
flowing out of itself like a river
that meets and parts and meets

It's for that love
our eyes shine

But oh for that time of parting
for that time we are not ever
sufficiently shored against

tell me how to hold that precious light

Take my hands and bless them
as they bless what they long to keep

Robert Grant Burns

COMMENTARY. *Yizkor* developed as part of the Yom Kippur service during the Middle Ages. Originally it was placed after the Torah reading before the scrolls were returned to the ark, but its location is a matter of local custom. In order to accommodate those who wish to enter the service for *Yizkor*, many communities now place it in the afternoon before the *Minḥah* service. Other possibilities for the placement of *Yizkor* abound. D.A.T.

YIZKOR / MEMORIAL SERVICE

Traditionally Yizkor, the memorial service, is recited after the Haftarah in the Torah service on the morning of Yom Kippur, but recitation of Yizkor can be shifted to any other time in the day. Yizkor prayers are customarily said while standing. Some congregations read a list of those who are to be remembered. Others publish a remembrance book.

יְהוָה מְה־אָדָם וַתִּדְעֵהוּ

ALMIGHTY ONE, what are human beings
that you take note of them,

בְּנֵי־אָנוּשׁ וַתַּחֲשִׁבֵהוּ:

the children of humanity
that you should think of them? ←

COMMENTARY. Calling to mind the memory of relatives or friends who have departed and giving *tzedakah* in their memory is a long-standing custom. It is mentioned in the medieval work *Midrash Tanhuma* as a Yom Kippur custom, though the *Yizkor* prayers themselves are somewhat later in origin. Recitation of *Yizkor* on the Pilgrimage Festivals began in European communities after the bloody destruction associated with the Crusades.

Because it was superstitiously believed that being present for *Yizkor* when one's parents were living could hasten their death, it used to be the case that only those required to say *Yizkor* because of the death of an immediate relative remained in the synagogue. After the Holocaust, which left so many with no one to say *Yizkor* for them, liberal congregations have encouraged everyone to join in reciting *Yizkor*. People are encouraged to recite *Yizkor* for each person whose memory is cherished. The traditional phrase said of the dead, *zikaron livrahah*/the memory for a blessing, reminds us that part of our purpose in remembering is to have our memories influence us to do good. This influence is made tangible in the custom of giving *tzedakah* in memory of loved ones before the holiday begins.

D.A.T.

יְהוָה...עוֹכֵר / ALMIGHTY ONE...shadow (Psalms 144:3-4).

אָדָם לְהֵבֶל דָּמָה

A human being is like a momentary breeze,

יָמָיו כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר:

a person's days are but a passing shadow.

בַּבֹּקֶר יִצִּיץ וְחָלָף

At dawn, life blossoms and renews itself,

לְעֶרֶב יְמוּלֵל וַיֵּבֶשׁ:

at dusk, it withers and dries up.

תָּשֵׁב אָנוּשׁ עַד-דָּפָא

You return a person unto dust.

וַתֹּאמֶר שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי-אָדָם:

You say: Return, O children of humanity!

We turn our thoughts to yesterday...to a world that lives only in our memory.

As we recall the days gone by, we know the past is irretrievable. Yet—through the gift of memory, we recapture treasured moments and images.

We are thankful for the happiness we knew with those no longer here, with whom we lived and laughed and loved.

We praise the Eternal wellspring of life who links yesterday to tomorrow. We affirm that despite all the tragedy bound up with living, it is still good to be alive.

We understand that there can be no love without loss, no joy without sorrow. May we have the courage to accept the all of life—the love and the loss—the joy and the sorrow, as we remember them.

Evelyn Mehlman

בבקר...ויבש / At dawn...dries up (Psalms 90:6).

חשב...אדם / You return...humanity (Psalms 90:3).

לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	<i>Each of Us Has a Name</i>
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַן לוֹ אֱלֹהִים	given by God
וְנָתַנוּ לוֹ אָבוֹי וְאִמּוֹ	and given by our parents
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ קוֹמָתוֹ וְאַפָּן חִיּוּכּוֹ	given by our stature and our smile
וְנָתַן לוֹ הָאָרִיג	and given by what we wear
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ הַהָרִים	given by the mountains
וְנָתַנוּ לוֹ פִּתְלָיו	and given by our walls
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ הַמַּזְלוֹת	given by the stars
וְנָתַנוּ לוֹ שְׁכֵנָיו	and given by our neighbors
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ חַטָּאוֹ	given by our sins
וְנָתַנָּה לוֹ כְּמִיָּהּתוֹ	and given by our longing
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ שׂוֹנְאָיו	given by our enemies
וְנָתַנָּה לוֹ אֲהֲבָתוֹ	and given by our love
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ חֲגִיו	given by our celebrations
וְנָתַנָּה לוֹ מְלָאכְתּוֹ	and given by our work
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַנוּ לוֹ תְּקוּפּוֹת הַשָּׁנָה	given by the seasons
וְנָתַן לוֹ עִוְרוֹנוֹ	and given by our blindness
לְכָל אִישׁ יֵשׁ שֵׁם	Each of us has a name
שֶׁנָּתַן לוֹ הַיָּם	given by the sea
וְנָתַן לוֹ	and given by
מוֹתוֹ:	our death. Zelda (translated by Marcia Falk)

יהוה מה־אדם וַתִּדְעֵהוּ
 בֶן־אָנוֹשׁ וַתַּחֲשִׁבֵהוּ
 אָדָם לַהֲבֵל דָּמָה
 יָמָיו כְּצֵל עוֹבֵר
 בַּבֶּקֶר יֵצֵיץ וּבְחָלָף
 לַעֲרֹב יִמּוֹלֵל וַיָּבֶשׁ
 תָּשִׁב אָנוֹשׁ עַד־דָּכָא
 וַתֹּאמֶר: שׁוּבוּ בְנֵי־אָדָם:

ALMIGHTY ONE, what are human beings
 that you take note of them,
 the children of humanity
 that you should think of them?
 A human being is like a momentary breeze,
 a person's days are but a passing shadow.
 At dawn, life blossoms and renews itself,
 at dusk, it withers and dries up.
 You return a person unto dust.
 You say: Return, O children of humanity!

עובר...יהוה / ALMIGHTY ONE...shadow (Psalms 144:3-4).

ובבקר... / At dawn...dries up (Psalms 90:6).

אדם... / You return...humanity (Psalms 90:3).

KAVANAH. Whenever we take time to think about our origins, or go back to the home where we spent our childhood, we find that things have changed. The years have taken their toll. Death has taken away many of the people who filled our early years. Our friendships have changed, our family relationships have changed. And yet—if only in our deepest memories, home continues to be with us. We carry our ancestors and our homes through all the years of our lives. We cannot go home again, but if we can remember, we are never really away from home.

L.G.B.

THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF

The night I lost you
someone pointed me towards
the Five Stages of Grief.
Go that way, they said,
it's easy, like learning to climb
stairs after amputation.
And so I climbed.
Denial was first.
I sat down at breakfast
carefully setting the table
for two. I passed you the toast—
you sat there. I passed
you the paper—you hid
behind it.
Anger seemed more familiar.
I burned the toast, snatched
the paper and read the headlines myself.
But they mentioned your departure
and so I moved on to
Bargaining. What could I exchange
for you? The silence
after storms? My typing fingers?
Before I could decide, Depression
came puffing up, a poor relation
its suitcase tied together
with string. In the suitcase
were bandages for the eyes
and bottles of sleep. I slid
all the way down the stairs
feeling nothing. ↪

And all the time Hope
flashed on and off
in defective neon.
Hope was a signpost pointing
straight in the air.
Hope was my uncle's middle name,
he died of it.
After a year I am still climbing,
though my feet slip
on your stone face.
The treeline
has long since disappeared;
green is a color
I have forgotten.
But now I see what I am climbing
towards: Acceptance
written in capital letters,
a special headline:
Acceptance.
Its name is in lights.
I struggle on,
waving and shouting.
Below, my whole life spreads its surf,
all the landscape I've ever known
or dreamed of. Below
a fish jumps: the pulse
in your neck.
Acceptance. I finally
reach it.
But something is wrong.
Grief is a circular staircase.
I have lost you.

Linda Pastan

LITTLE RUTH

Sometimes I think about you, little Ruth—remembering
how we were separated by great distance in our childhood,
and how they burned you in the camps.

Were you here now, you'd be a woman of 65,
a woman at the threshold of old age.

And I don't know what befell you in your short life
after the time that we were separated,
how far you got, what signs of passage
had been hung upon your shoulders, on your sleeve,
on your courageous spirit. What glittering stars
have clung to you, what signs of heroism, what
medals of love were hung upon your neck.

What peace was on you—on you, may there be peace!
And what has happened to your lifetime's unused years?
Are they still packed in pretty packages,
or were they added to my life? Did you make me become
your bank of love, like banks in Switzerland
whose accounts are voided when their owners die?
Shall I inherit all of this for my children
whom you have never seen?

You gave me your life, much the way a wine merchant
makes others drunk while staying sober,
making death sober like you,
the clearest-headed one in all the land of death ↪

רות הקטנה

לפַעַמִּים אָנִי זֹכֵר אוֹתָךְ רות הקטנה,
שֶׁנִּפְרַדְנוּ בִּילְדוּת רְחוֹקָה, שֶׁשָּׂרְפוּ אוֹתָךְ בַּמַּחְנוֹת.
אֵלֹה חַיִּית עֲכָשִׁיו, הָיִית אֲשֶׁה בֵּת שְׁשִׁים וְחָמֵשׁ,
אֲשֶׁה עַל סֵף זָקְנָה. בֵּת עֲשָׂרִים נִשְׂרָפָת,
וְאֵינִי יוֹדֵעַ מָה קָרָה לָךְ בַּחַיִּיךְ הַקְּצָרִים
מֵאִז נִפְרַדְנוּ. לָמָּה הִגַּעְתָּ, אֵילֹה סִימְנֵי דְרָגָה
הַעֲנִקוּ לָךְ עַל כְּתִפֶּיךָ, עַל שְׂרוּלֶיךָ, עַל
נִפְשֶׁךָ הָאֲמִיצָה, אֵילֹה כּוֹכָבִים מִבְּרִיקִים
הַדְּבִיקוּ לָךְ, אֵילֹה אוֹתוֹת גְּבוּרָה, אֵילֹה
מְדַלִּיּוֹת אֶהְבָּה תָּלוּ עַל צִוְּאָרְךָ,
אֵיזָה שְׁלוֹם עָלֶיךָ, עָלֶיךָ הַשְׁלוֹם.
וּמָה קָרָה לְשָׁנוֹת חַיִּיךָ הֵלֹא מְשֻׁמָּשׁוֹת?
הָאֵם הֵן עֲדִין אַרְוֹזוֹת כְּחִבִּילוֹת יָפוֹת,
הָאֵם נוֹסְפוּ לְחַיִּי? הָאֵם הִפְכָּת אוֹתִי
בֶּנֶק הָאֶהְבָּה שְׁלֹךְ כָּמוֹ הַבְּנִיקִים בְּשׁוּיָן
שֶׁהִמְטָמוֹן נִשְׁמַר בָּהֶם גַּם אַחֲרֵי מוֹת בְּעָלָיו?
הָאֵם אוֹרִישׁ אֶת כָּל אֱלֹה לִילְדֵי
שְׁלֹא רָאִית אוֹתָם מֵעוֹלָם? —

to someone drunk with life like me,
wallowing in his forgetfulness.
Sometimes, I think about you, during times
I hadn't planned on, and in places
that I hadn't designated for a memory,
but rather for some transitory thing that doesn't linger.
Like at an airport, when the arriving passengers
are standing wearily by the revolving ramp
that brings their baggage and their packages,
and suddenly, with cries of joy, they find their own,
like at a resurrection of the dead,
and then they exit to their lives.
And there is one bag that keeps coming back
and disappearing once again, returning once again,
so slowly in the empty hall,
before, again and again, it passes on.
Thus does your quiet image pass before me;
thus do I remember you, until the ramp stops moving
and is silent. So it goes.

Yehuda Amichai

מפֿכַּחַת מוֹת פֿמוֹךְ, וצְלוּלַת שְׁאוּל
לְשֹׁכּוֹר חַיִּים פֿמוֹנִי מִתְּגוּלִל בְּשִׁכְחָתוֹ.
לְפַעֲמִים אֲנִי זוֹכֵר אוֹתְךָ בְּזִמְנִים
שֶׁלֹא שַׁעֲרָתִי וּבִמְקוֹמוֹת שֶׁלֹא נוֹעְדוּ לְזָכְרוֹן,
אֲלֹא לְחוֹלֶלְךָ וּלְעוֹבֵר שֶׁלֹא נִשְׁאַר;
כִּמוֹ בְּנִמְל תְּעוּפָה פֶּשֶׁה נוֹסְעִים הַמְּגִיעִים
עוֹמְדִים עֵיפִים לִיד הַסֶּרֶט הֵנֶע וְהַמְּסֻתוֹבֵב
שֶׁמֵּבִיא אֶת מְזוֹדוּתֵיהֶם וְחִבְלֹתֵיהֶם,
וְהֵם מְגַלִּים אֶת שְׁלֵהֶם בְּקִרְיָאוֹת שְׁמֻחָה
כִּמוֹ בְּתַחֲתֵת הַמַּתִּים וִיוֹצְאִים אֶל חַיֵּיהֶם.
וַיֵּשׁ מְזוֹדָה אַחַת שְׁחוֹזֶרֶת וְשׁוֹב נֶעְלָמֶת
וְשׁוֹב חוֹזֶרֶת, לָאֵט לָאֵט, בְּאוֹלֶם הַמִּתְרוֹקֵן,
וְשׁוֹב וְשׁוֹב הִיא עוֹבֶרֶת,
כִּךְ עוֹבֶרֶת דְּמוּתְךָ הַשְׁקֵטָה עַל פָּנָי,
כִּךְ אֲנִי זוֹכֵר אוֹתְךָ, עַד
שֶׁהַסֶּרֶט יַעֲמֵד מְלַכָּת. וְדַמוֹ סָלָה.

My protector, you are our abode,
one generation to the next,
since before the mountains came to birth,
before the birthpangs of the land and world.
From eternity unto eternity, you are divine.

Truly, a thousand years are in your eyes
like yesterday—so quickly does it pass—
or like the watchman's nighttime post.

You pour upon them sleep, they sleep.
When morning comes, it vanishes like chaff.

At dawn, life blossoms and renews itself,
at dusk, it withers and dries up.

Years of our lifetime are but seventy
—perhaps, among the strongest, eighty years—

and most of them are toil and fatigue,
then quickly it all ends, we fly away.

Who knows the full strength of your fury?
Is our fear of you the equal of your wrath?

Oh, let us know how to assess our days,
how we may bring the heart some wisdom.

Let your accomplishment be visible to those who serve you,
let your beauty rest upon their children,

let our divine protector's pleasure be upon us,
and the labor of our hands, make it secure,
the labor of our hands ensure!

Selections from Psalm 90

אֲדָנִי מֵעוֹן אַתָּה הָיִיתָ לָנוּ בְּדֹר וָדֹר:
בְּטָרֶם הָרִים יִלְדוּ וּתְחִלָּל אֶרֶץ וְתִבֵּל
וּמֵעוֹלָם עַד-עוֹלָם אַתָּה אֵל:

כִּי אָלֶיךָ שָׁנִים בְּעֵינֶיךָ כִּי אֶתְמוּל כִּי יַעֲבֹר
וְאַשְׁמֹרֶה בְּלֵילָה:

זֶרְמָתָם שָׁנָה יִהְיוּ בְּפֶקֶד פְּתָצִיר יִחְלֶף:
בְּפֶקֶד יִצִּין וְיִחְלֶף לְעָרֵב יְמוּלֵל וְיִבֵּשׁ:

יְמֵי-שְׁנוֹתֵינוּ בָּהֶם שְׁבָעִים שָׁנָה וְאִם בְּגִבּוּרֹת שְׁמוֹנִים שָׁנָה:
וְרָחֲבָם עָמַל וְאֶזֶן כִּי-גֹז חֵישׁ וְנִצְפָּה:
מִי-יִוָּדַע עַד אֶפְסָה וּכְיִרְאָתָךְ עֶבְרָתָךְ:
לְמִנּוֹת יָמֵינוּ כֵּן הוֹדַע וְנִבְיָא לְבָב חֻקָּה:

יִרְאָה אֶל-עֲבָרֶיךָ פְּעֻלָּךְ וְהִדְרָךְ עַל-בְּנֵיהֶם:
וְיִהְיֶה נָעַם אֲדָנִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהוּ:

FOR A GRANDMOTHER

My mother's mother died
in the spring of her years,
and her daughter forgot her face.
Her portrait, engraved
on my grandfather's heart,
was erased from the world of images
when he died.

In the house, just her mirror remained,
sunk with age in its silver frame.
And I, the pale grandchild
who does not resemble her,
peer into it today as into a lake
that hides its treasures underwater.

Deep behind my face,
I see a young woman—
pink-cheeked, smiling,
a wig on her head—
threading a long-looped earring
through the tender flesh of her lobe.

Deep behind my face,
shines the bright gold of her eyes.
And the mirror passes on
the family lore:
She was very beautiful.

Lea Goldberg (translated by Marcia Falk)

מִתָּה אִמָּה שֶׁל אָמִי
בְּאֵבִיב יָמֶיהָ. וּבִתָּה
לֹא זָכְרָה אֶת פָּנֶיהָ. דְּיוֹקָנָה הַחֲרוּט
עַל לְבוֹ שֶׁל סִבִּי
נִמְחָה מֵעוֹלָם הַדְּמוּיוֹת
אַחֲרֵי מוֹתוֹ.

רַק הָרָאִי שָׁלָה נִשְׁתִּיר בְּבֵית.
הַעֲמִיק מְרֹב שָׁנִים בְּמִשְׁכָּצֶת הַפֶּסֶף.
וְאֲנִי, נִכְדָּתָה הַחֹרֶת. שְׁאִינֶנִּי דוֹמָה לָהּ,
מִבִּיטָה הַיּוֹם אֶל תּוֹכוֹ כְּאֵל תּוֹף
אֲגַם הַטּוֹמֵן אוֹצְרוֹתָיו
מִתַּחַת לַמַּיִם.

עֵמֶק מָאָד, מֵאַחֲוֵרֵי פָנֶי,
אֲנִי רוֹאָה אִשָּׁה צְעִירָה
וְרֹדֶת לְחַיִּים מַחֲכֶכֶת.
וּפָאָה נִכְרִית לְרֹאשָׁהּ.
הִיא עוֹלָדֶת
עָגִיל מְאָרָךְ אֶל תְּנוּף אֲזֻנָּה. מִשְׁחִילָתָהּ
בְּנֶקֶב בְּבֶשֶׁר הָעֶנֶג
שֶׁל הָאֶזֶן.

עֵמֶק מָאָד, מֵאַחֲוֵרֵי פָנֶי, קוֹרֶנֶת
זְהוּבִית בְּהִירָה שֶׁל עֵינֶיהָ.
וְהָרָאִי מִמָּשִׁיף אֶת מְטָרָת
הַמִּשְׁפָּחָה:
שֶׁהִיא הִיתָה יָפָה מָאָד.

FOR A GRANDFATHER

My grandfather was a farmer.
The day before he died
he planted a garden
A garden that nourished his family
through the sunless season of
mourning
far into the golden season of harvest.

My grandfather was a farmer.
Before he died
he planted a lifetime of seeds.
Diligently he planted honesty and
reverence;

Inadvertently he planted gentleness and
humor—
Bounty enough to nourish me
all the seasons of my life
far into the planting season of my child.

Dana Shuster

FOR A PARENT

Move to the front
of the line
a voice says, and suddenly
there is nobody
left standing between you
and the world, to take
the first blows
on their shoulders.
This is the place in books
where part one ends, and
part two begins,
and there is no part three.
The slate is wiped
not clean but like a canvas
painted over in white
so that a whole new landscape
must be started,
bits of the old
still showing underneath—
those colors sadness lends
to a certain hour of evening.
Now the line of light
at the horizon
is the hinge between earth
and heaven, only visible
a few moments
as the sun drops
its rusted padlock
into place.

Linda Pastan

In many houses
all at once
I see my mother and father
and they are young
as they walk in.

Why should
my tears come,
to see them laughing?

That they cannot
see me
is of no matter.

I was once
their dream;
now
they are mine.

Author Unknown

FOR A CHILD

I will never be able to stop my tears.
And the day is far off when I will
Forget this cruel day.
Why could we not have died with him?
His little clothes still hang on his rack
His milk is still by his bed.
Overcome, it is as though life had left us.
We lie prostrate and insensible all day.
I am no longer young enough
To try to understand what has happened.
I was warned of it in a dream.
No medicine would have helped
Even if it had been heaped mountain high.
The disease took its course inexorable.
It would be better for me if I took
A sword and cut open my bowels.
They are already cut to pieces with sorrow.
I realize what I am doing
And try to come to myself again,
But I am exhausted and helpless,
Carried away by excess of sorrow.

Su Tung P'o

FOR A SPOUSE / PARTNER

As long
as I speak
your name
you are
not dead

as long
as I think
your pain
I cannot
grieve

the granite marker
tells
your name
your age

the bleak horizon
scars
the barren hedge

as long
as I
you
are not dead

Hannah Kahn

FOR A SUICIDE

...transcripts of fog...

Speak your tattered Kaddish for all suicides:

Praise to life though it crumbled in like a tunnel
on ones we knew and loved

Praise to life though its windows blew shut
on the breathing-room of ones we knew and loved

Praise to life though ones we knew and loved
loved it badly, too well, and not enough

Praise to life though it tightened like a knot
on the hearts of ones we thought we knew loved us

Praise to life giving room and reason
to ones we knew and loved who felt unpraisable

Praise to them, how they loved it, when they could.

Adrienne Rich



ON HEALING

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 with 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.

Marjorie Pizer

It is customary to rise for Yizkor prayers, El Maley Rahamim, and Kaddish.

Prayer in remembrance of a male:

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נִשְׁמַת _____ שֶׁהָלַךְ לְעוֹלָמוֹ:
אֲנָא תְהִי נַפְשׁוֹ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים וְתְהִי מְנוּחָתוֹ כְּבוֹד: שֶׁבַע
שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ נְעִימוֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ נֶצַח. אָמֵן:

Let God remember the soul of _____ who went to his place of eternal rest. Please let his soul be bound up with the living in the continuum of life, and may his rest be honorable. Grant him abundant joy in your presence, and sweet pleasures at your right hand for eternity. Amen.

Prayer in remembrance of a female:

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נִשְׁמַת _____ שֶׁהָלְכָה
לְעוֹלָמָהּ: אֲנָא תְהִי נַפְשָׁהּ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים וְתְהִי מְנוּחָתָהּ
כְּבוֹד: שֶׁבַע שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ נְעִימוֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ נֶצַח. אָמֵן:

Let God remember the soul of _____ who went to her place of eternal rest. Please let her soul be bound up with the living in the continuum of life, and may her rest be honorable. Grant her abundant joy in your presence, and sweet pleasures at your right hand for eternity. Amen.

KAVANAH. *Yizkor*, a time to mourn our lost loved ones, is for some a time to mourn relationships that were not fully loving. We pray, זכרון לברכה / *zikaron livrahah* / "may the memory be a blessing." We hope that with the passing of time we can let go of our pain and disappointment in the shortcoming of our deceased loved ones and see them as blessings in our lives, distilling the goodness in them which may now be overshadowed. In coming to terms with difficult relationships, we are blessed with peace, and memory becomes blessing.

B.P.T.

אֵל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמֵי הַמָּצָא מְנוּחָה נְכוֹנָה תַּחַת כְּנָפֵי
 הַשְּׁכִינָה בְּמַעְלוֹת קְדוּשִׁים וְטְהוֹרִים כְּזֶהר הָרָקִיעַ מְזַהְרִים
 לְנִשְׁמוֹת יְקִירֵינוּ וְקְדוּשֵׁינוּ שֶׁהֲלָכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם: אָנָּה בַּעַל הָרַחֲמִים
 הַסְתִּירָם בְּצֵל כְּנָפֶיךָ לְעוֹלָמִים וְצָר בְּצִרְרֵי הַחַיִּים אֶת נִשְׁמָתָם:
 יְהוָה הוּא נִחַלְתָּם וַיְנַחֵם בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל מִשְׁכָּבָם וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן:

God filled with mercy,
 dwelling in the heavens' heights,
 bring proper rest
 beneath the wings of your Shehīnah,
 amid the ranks of the holy and the pure,
 illuminating like the brilliance of the skies
 the souls of our beloved and our blameless
 who went to their eternal place of rest.
 May you who are the source of mercy
 shelter them beneath your wings eternally,
 and bind their souls among the living,
 that they may rest in peace.
 And let us say: Amen.

For the Martyrs, Soldiers of the People Israel, and Victims of the Holocaust:

אֵל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים הַמֵּצֵא מְנוּחָה נְכוֹנָה תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי
הַשְּׁכִינָה בְּמַעְלוֹת קְדוּשִׁים וְטְהוּרִים כְּאֹהֶר הַרְקִיעַ מְזֻהָרִים אֶת־
נַשְׁמוֹת חַיְלֵי צָבָא הַהִגְנָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל־אֱלֹה שְׁמַסְרוּ אֶת־נַפְשָׁם
עַל־קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם וְשִׁנְהֵרְגוּ בַּשּׂוֹאָה: אָנָּה בָּעַל הַרַחֲמִים תְּסַתִּירם
בְּצִל כַּנְּפֶיךָ לְעוֹלָמִים וְצָרוּר בְּצָרוּר הַחַיִּים אֶת־נַשְׁמוֹתָם וְיָנִיחוּ
בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל־מִשְׁכָּבָם וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן:

God filled with mercy, dwelling in the heavens' heights, bring proper rest beneath the wings of your Sheḥinah, amid the ranks of the holy and the pure, illuminating like the brilliance of the skies the souls of Israel's soldiers, and all those who have given up their lives in affirmation of your holy Name, and all destroyed in the Shoah. May you who are the source of mercy shelter them beneath your wings eternally, and bind their souls among the living, that they may rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.

COMMENTARY. In this *El Maley Rahamim* specific references to those who have died fighting in Israel's wars and those murdered in the Holocaust have been added to the traditional phrase "all those who have given up their lives in affirmation of your holy Name." These events of our time demand special recognition. Sanctification of God's name through voluntary martyrdom was an altogether too common phenomenon in the rabbinic and medieval periods, which were often punctuated by savage persecution. Death in the Holocaust was qualitatively different because it could not be averted by the victim—even conversion had no power to save. Many contemporary Jews view the tragic events of the Holocaust as a lessening of God's presence in the world, though acts of bravery, piety, and caring manifested the divine even then.

Israeli soldiers generally understand their sacrifices to be for the sake of their families and their people rather than as part of an effort to make God manifest. Nonetheless their sacrifices, which have revived and preserved Israel as a Jewish home, have a meaning to Jews everywhere far beyond that of acres of land. They have kept alive a dream we share—our land, not only free, but at peace.

D.A.T.

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

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

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

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

In the rustling of 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.

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

Jack Riemer and Sylvan D. Kamens

KADDISH YATOM / THE MOURNER'S KADDISH

Reader: Let God's name be made great and holy in the world that was created as God willed. May God complete the holy realm in your own lifetime, in your days, and in the days of all the house of Israel, quickly and soon. And say: Amen.

Congregation: May God's great name be blessed, forever and as long as worlds endure.

Reader: May it be blessed, and praised, and glorified, and held in honor, viewed with awe, embellished, and revered; and may the blessed name of holiness be hailed, though it be higher by far than all the blessings, songs, praises, and consolations that we utter in this world. And say: Amen.

May Heaven grant a universal peace, and life for us, and for all Israel. And say: Amen.

May the one who creates harmony above, make peace for us and for all Israel, and for all who dwell on earth. And say: Amen.

Love is not changed by Death,
And nothing is lost and all in the end is harvest.

Edith Sitwell

קדיש יתום

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיף
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָגְלָא וּבְזִמָּן
קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא
לְעָלָא לְעָלָא מְכַל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמַתָּא דְאַמִּירָן
בְּעָלְמָא וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ
אָמֵן:

עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוּמֵי הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Yitgadal veyitkadesh shemey raba
be'alma divra ĥirutey veyamlıh malĥutey
beĥayeyĥon uvyomeyĥon uvĥayey deĥol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.

Congregation: Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almaya.

Yitbarah veyishtabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam
veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh veyit-halal
shemey dekudsha berih hu
le'ela le'ela mikol birĥata veshirata
tushbeĥata veneĥemata da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen.

Yehey shelama raba min shemaya vehayim aleynu ve'al kol
yisra'el ve'imru amen.
Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu ve'al kol
yisra'el ve'al kol yoshvey tevel ve'imru amen.

A psalm of David.

THE ETERNAL is my shepherd; I shall never be in need.

Amid the choicest grasses does God set me down.

God leads me by the calmest waters,

and restores my soul.

God takes me along paths of righteousness,

in keeping with the honor of God's name.

Even should I wander in a valley of the darkest shadows,

I will fear no evil.

You are with me, God. Your power and support

are there to comfort me.

You set in front of me a table

in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.

Surely, good and loving-kindness will pursue me

all the days of my life,

and I shall come to dwell inside the house

of THE ETERNAL for a length of days.

Psalms 23

מִזְמוֹר

לְדָוִד יְהוָה רָעִי לֹא אֶחָסֵר: בְּנֹאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי

עַל־מִי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי: נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב
 יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ:
 גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיא צִלְמֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע
 כִּי־אַתָּה עֲמָדִי שְׁבֻטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֲנֶתְךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֹמֵנִי:
 תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֶגֶד צָרָרִי
 דִּשְׁנֹת בִּשְׁמֹן רֹאשִׁי כּוֹסֵי רוּיָה:
 אֵךְ טוֹב וַחֲסֵד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי
 וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה לְאַרְךָ יָמִים:

Mizmor ledavid adonay ro'i lo ehsar. Binot deshe yarbitzeni
 al mey menuhot y^{en}ahaleni. Nafshi yeshovev
 yanheni vemageley tzedek lema'an shemo.
 Gam ki eleh begey tzalmavet lo ira ra
 ki atah imadi shivteha umishanteha hemah yenahamuni.
 Ta'aroh lefanay shulhan neged tzoreray
 dishanta vashemen roshi kosi revayah.
 Ah tov vahesed yirdefuni kol yemey hayay
 veshavti beveyt adonay le'oreh yamim.