

A vibrant stained glass window featuring a central tree with a dark brown trunk and green foliage. The tree's leaves are stylized, with some containing red circular accents. The background is a complex geometric pattern of intersecting lines in various colors, including blue, purple, yellow, and red, creating a grid-like structure. The overall composition is rich in color and detail.

YIZKOR

MEMORIAL PRAYERS

God is my shepherd...I shall not want



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

We extend our warm condolences to all of our community members who have lost near and dear ones this past year. May the Holy One heal your wounds, lighten your burden of sorrow and give you renewed strength in the year to come.

A Time...

A time to be born, and a time to die.

We do not choose to be born, and we do not choose to die. But we do choose the way we live. We cannot hope to avoid death, but we can invest a part of ourselves in those things which never die, and thus live on beyond our mortal span.

A time to plant, and a time to harvest what has been planted.

We harvest what others have planted before us. The harvest of a good life sustains those who survive. May we plant so that those who come after us will enjoy a harvest which nourishes life and hope.

A time to break down, and a time to build up.

Now is the time to break down the walls of estrangement which separate siblings, parents and children, spouses, each of us from God. Now is the time to build up the bonds of caring which draw us closer to one another in love.

A time to mourn, and a time to rejoice.

At this time, we mourn for the dead. We mourn also for the days we have wasted, for the thanks we did not offer, for the tears we did not wipe away, for the deeds we left undone. In time, the pain will subside. Then, may we rejoice in gratitude for the years we shared, for the memories which death cannot take from us.

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together.

Let us cast away the heavy rocks of remorse and regret which lie on many hearts, the rubble of blasted dreams and collapsed hopes. May we soon find the strength to gather the sturdy stones with which to rebuild lives of confidence and hope.

A time to seek, and a time to lose.

Now is the time to seek the good in each other and in our recollections of others. Now is the time to lose the pettiness and callousness which diminish our stature and shrink our horizons.

A time to love, and a time to hate.

Now is the time to love, to support, and to enrich one another. Now is also the time to mute malice and meanness and selfishness, to avoid all that deprives life of its beauty and joy.

A time for war, and a time for peace.

Now is the time to wage war against despair and hopelessness, to sustain a stubborn faith that the time will surely come when those who now mourn will again know serenity of spirit and inner peace.

— *Author Unknown*



A Personal Meditation (Selected from Psalm 103)

Eternal God, Master of mercy, give me the gift of remembering. May my memories of the dead be tender and true, undiminished by time; let me recall them, and love them, as they were. Shelter me with the gift of tears. Let me express my sense of loss – my sorrow, my pain, as well as my love, and words unspoken. Bless me with the gift of prayer. May I face You with an open heart, with trusting faith, unembarrassed and unashamed. Strengthen me with the gift of hope. May I always believe in the beauty of life, the power of goodness, the right to joy. May I surrender my being, and the soul of the dead, to Your all-knowing compassion.

אָנוֹשׁ, כְּחֶצִיר יָמָיו כְּצִיץ הַשָּׂדֶה, כֵּן יִצְיָץ.
 כִּי רוּחַ עֲבָרָה-בוֹ וְאֵינָנוּ וְלֹא-יִכְיֶרְנוּ עוֹד מִקּוֹמוֹ.
 וְחֶסֶד יְהוָה מְעוֹלָם וְעַד-עוֹלָם עַל-יִרְאָיו וְצַדִּיקְתּוֹ לְבָנֵי בָנִים:

Mortals, their days are like those of grass; they bloom like a flower of the field. A wind passes by and it is no more; its own place no longer knows it. But the steadfast love of God is for all eternity for those who revere the Eternal, and God's beneficence is for the children's children.

– Author Unknown

B'yado

*B'yado afkid ruchi, b'eit ishan v'aira
 V'im ruchi g'veyati, Adonai li v'lo ira.*

My soul I give to You, My spirit in Your care.
 Draw me near, I shall not fear,
 Hold me in Your hand/safely in Your hand.

– Craig Taubman

Eli Eli

*Eli, Eli, She'lo Yigamer L'Olam
 Ha'Chol v'HaYam Rishrush shel HaMayim
 B'rak HaShamayim, Tefillat HaAdam.*

O God, my God, I pray that these things never end:
 The sand and the sea, the rush of the waters,
 The crash of the heavens, the prayer of the heart.

– Hannah Szenes



For All of the Firsts without a Loved One (abridged)

Oh God, the calendar tells me a big day is coming
and this is the first one in this new reality.
I don't know how to get through it.

Show me what to do with
the memories, the traditions,
the pain, and the excruciating beauty
of all that was.

Blessed are we who come to you, oh God,
in the midst of grief and loss, fear and longing, irritability and anger,
gratitude and sweet remembrance,
and so much exhaustion...

Grant me solitude enough for solace,
and company enough for comfort,
people to be with who know how to slip quietly
under the burden of this grief
and shoulder it with me without much to say.

Blessed are we who ask you for permission to do things the same way
or completely differently,
to wade through raw emotions
or ride on the surface of it all.
Give us wisdom and guidance
that transcends the strangeness,
making whatever little plans are possible.

Blessed are we,
who ask for a way forward during this time,
to celebrate some small ritual of remembrance
that becomes a safe place to store the love and the grief,
the anger and the ache of the knowledge
that there is no one who can take their place. Not one.

Blessed are we who ask you, God,
to take hold of the fear,
and us with it,
and lead us through.

– *Kate Bowler*



A Song Of Ascents

אָשָׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים, מֵאֵין יָבֵא עֲזָרִי.
 עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עָשָׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ.
 אֵל יִתֵּן לְמוֹט רַגְלֶךָ, אֵל יָנוּם שְׁמֹרֶךָ.
 הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל.
 יְהוָה שְׁמֹרֶךָ, יְהוָה צִלְּךָ עַל יַד יְמִינֶךָ.
 יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יַכְּכָה, וַיָּרֵחַ בַּלַּיְלָה.
 יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל־רָע, יִשְׁמַר אֶת־נַפְשֶׁךָ.
 יְהוָה יִשְׁמַר־צִאֲתֶךָ וּבּוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

I lift my eyes to the mountains;
 from where will my help come?
 My help is from ADONAI, who made the heavens and the earth.
 Adonai will not let your foot slip,
 Your guardian does not slumber;
 for the guardian of Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers.
 Adonai is your protector;
 ADONAI is the shield on your right hand.
 The sun will not strike you down by day
 nor the moon by night.
 ADONAI will protect you from every evil and watch over You.
 ADONAI will watch over your coming and your going
 from this time forth, and ever and ever.

— Psalm 121



A Prayer to Begin the Journey

Slow Down

This is not a task to be checked off a To Do list.

Let us enter holy ground together

Each of us alone; all of us interwoven.

Let us bring a journey

To those we love but whose flesh and blood are no longer here.

They ask not for us to grieve

But to hear their messages.

We are bound to everyone who came before us

Their bodies gone,

Their spirit within reach

This is the opportunity of the moment.

We feel alone because of our barriers

And the barriers others created around them.

Because we learned to blockade ourselves from harm.

Because we built walled cities to feel safe.

To succeed in our quest,

We must lower our guard against imagined enemies.

Discard the armor of tired assumptions

And move beyond the debris of familiar stories.

Even if we have traveled here before

Let this journey take us on a new path

Let us be willing to be surprised

As we welcome the souls of our ancestors.

– *Rich Orloff*



PSALM 23

A Psalm Of David

יהוה רעי, לא אחסר.

ADONAI is my shepherd; I shall not want.

בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי, עַל מֵי מְנַחֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי,

God lays me down in green pastures, leads me to still waters,

נִפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבָב, יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי צְדָק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ.

Renews my life, guides me in right paths—for that is God's way.

גַּם כִּי אֵלֶּךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמוֹת

Though I walk through a valley as dark as death,

לֹא אִירָא רָע כִּי אַתָּה עִמָּדִי.

I fear no evil, for You are with me;

שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתְּךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחַמֵּנִי.

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שִׁלְחֹן נֶגְדַ צָרָרִי,

You spread a table before me in full view of my foes;

דִּשְׁנָתְךָ בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי כִּי יִהְיֶה.

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

אֵךְ טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל יְמֵי חַיִּי,

Only goodness and steadfast love shall pursue
me all the days of my life,

וְשִׁבְתִּי בְּבַיִת יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים.

And I shall dwell in the house of ADONAI forever.



Achat Sha'alti

*Achat Sha'alti mayayt Adonai otah avakesh
Shivti b'veyt Adonai kol y'may chayai
Lachazot b'noam Adonai u'l'vaker b'haychalo*

One thing I ask of God – for this I yearn:
To dwell in the house of God
All the days of my life,
To behold God's beauty, to pray in God's sanctuary.

– *Psalm 27*

Silent Reflection (abridged)

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

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

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

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

– *Simcha Kling*

There are ones who loved us before we were us,
before we knew what love is.
Who we are and all that under sun and star
in the fold of the unfolding universe can still be.
What was is now no longer.
Here is no foregone conclusion or beginning to tell.
Our lives, and we, are unresolved forever changed,
because they loved us, love of which there is no end.

– *Devon Spier*



יִזְכּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נִשְׁמַת

(for a father) אָבִי מוֹרִי _____

(for a husband) אִישִׁי _____

(for a partner) בֶּן זֹוגִי _____

(for a brother) אָחִי _____

(for a son) בְּנִי _____

(for other relative) קְרוּבִי _____

(for a friend) חֲבֵרִי _____

(others) _____

שְׁהַלֵּךְ לְעוֹלָמוֹ [שְׁהִלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם]. הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב/נוֹדֶבֶת
צְדָקָה בְּעַד הַזְכָּרַת נִשְׁמָתוֹ [נִשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם]. אָנָּה תְּהִי
[תְּהִיֵּינָה] נִפְשׁוֹ צְרוּרָה [נִפְשָׁם צְרוּרוֹת] בְּצְרוּר הַחַיִּים
וְתִהְיֶי מְנוּחָתוֹ [מְנוּחָתָם] כְּבוֹד, שְׁבַע שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת־
פְּנֵיהָ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיַמִּינָךְ נְצַח. אָמֵן.

יִזְכּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נִשְׁמַת

(for a mother) אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי _____

(for a wife) אִשְׁתִּי _____

(for a partner) בַּת זֹוגִי _____

(for a sister) אָחוֹתִי _____

(for a daughter) בַּתִּי _____

(for other relative) קְרוּבַתִּי _____

(for a friend) חֲבֵרַתִּי _____

(others) _____

שְׁהִלְכָה לְעוֹלָמָהּ [שְׁהִלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמוֹן]. הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב/נוֹדֶבֶת
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נְעִימוֹת בְּיַמִּינָךְ נְצַח. אָמֵן.



My God remember the soul of
 my father _____
 my husband _____
 my partner _____
 my brother _____
 my son _____
 my relative _____
 my friend _____
 (others) _____

who has [have] gone to his [their] eternal home. In loving testimony to his life [their lives], through charitable deeds, prayer and remembrance, may his [their] soul[s] be bound up in the bond of life. May I prove myself worthy of the many gifts with which he [they] blessed me. May these moments of meditation strengthen the ties that link me to his [their] memory. May he [they] rest in peace forever in God's presence. Amen.

My God remember the soul of
 my mother _____
 my wife _____
 my partner _____
 my sister _____
 my daughter _____
 my relative _____
 my friend _____
 (others) _____

who has [have] gone to her [their] eternal home. In loving testimony to her life (their lives), through charitable deeds, prayer and remembrance, may her [their] soul[s] be bound up in the bond of life. May I prove myself worthy of the many gifts with which she [they] blessed me. May these moments of meditation strengthen the ties that link me to her [their] memory. May she [they] rest in peace forever in God's presence. Amen.



יִזְכּוֹר אֱלֹהִים נִשְׁמוֹת כָּל-אֲחֵינוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁמִסְרוּ
 אֶת-נַפְשָׁם עַל קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם. הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב/נוֹדֶבֶת צְדָקָה
 בְּעַד הַזְּכָרָת נִשְׁמָתָם. אָנָּה יִשְׁמַע בְּחַיֵּינוּ הַד גְּבוּרָתָם
 וּמִסִּירוֹתָם וַיִּרְאֶה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו טֹהַר לְבָבָם וְתַהֲיֶינָה
 נִפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצָרוֹר הַחַיִּים וְתֵהִי מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד,
 שְׂבַע שְׁמַחוֹת אֶת-פְּנֵיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיַמִּינְךָ נְצַח. אָמֵן.

יִזְכּוֹר אֱלֹהִים נִשְׁמוֹת יְדִידֵינוּ חֲבָרֵי הַקֶּהֱל הַקְּדוֹשׁ הַזֶּה
 שְׁהִלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם. אָנָּה תַהֲיֶינָה נִפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת
 בְּצָרוֹר הַחַיִּים וְתֵהִי מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד, שְׂבַע שְׁמַחוֹת אֶת-
 פְּנֵיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיַמִּינְךָ נְצַח. אָמֵן.

אֵל מְלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים, הַמְצִיא מְנוּחָה נְכוֹנָה
 תַּחַת כְּנָפֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה, בְּמַעְלוֹת קְדוּשִׁים וּטְהוּרִים, כְּזֶהָר
 הַרְקִיעַ מְזֹהֲרִים, לְנִשְׁמוֹת כָּל-אֵלֶּה שֶׁהַזְּכָרְנוּ הַיּוֹם לְבִרְכָּה,
 שְׁהִלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם, בְּגַן עֵדֶן תֵּהִי מְנוּחָתָם. אָנָּה בְּעַל
 הַרְחָמִים, הַסְתִּירָם בְּסֶתֶר כְּנַפֵּיךָ לְעוֹלָמִים. וַיִּצְרוֹר בְּצָרוֹר
 הַחַיִּים אֶת-נִשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם. יְהוּה הוּא נַחֲלָתָם. וַיְנַוְחוּ בְשָׁלוֹם
 עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹתֵיהֶם. וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.



In Memory Of Martyrs

May God remember the souls of the martyrs of our people, who gave their lives for the sanctification of God's name. In their memory do I pledge tz'dakah. May their bravery, their dedication, and their purity be reflected in our lives. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life. May they rest in peace forever in God's presence. Amen.

In Memory Of Congregants

We remember the souls of our friends, members of this holy congregation. Exalted, compassionate God, comfort the bereaved families of this congregation. Help us to perpetuate everything that was worthy in the lives of those no longer with us, whom we remember this day. May their memory endure as a blessing. Amen.

In Memory Of All The Dead

Exalted, compassionate God, grant perfect peace in Your sheltering presence, among the holy and the pure, whose radiance is like the heavens, to the souls of all those we have recalled today. May their memory be a blessing, and may they rest in paradise. Master of mercy, may they find eternal shelter beneath Your sheltering wings, and may their souls be bound up in the bond of life. ADONAI is their portion. May they rest in peace. And let us say: Amen.



קדיש יתום

יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבא,
 בעלמא די ברא, כרעותה,
 וימליך מלכותה בתיכון ובימיכון
 ובחיי דכל-בית ישראל,
 בעגלא ובזמן קריב,
 ואמרו אמן.

יהא שמה רבא מברך לעלם ולעלמי עלמיא.

יתברך וישתבח
 ויתפאר ויתרום
 ויתנשא ויתהדר
 ויתעלה ויתהלל
 שמה דקדשא, בריך הוא,
 לעלא [לעלא] מכל-ברכתא ושירתא
 תשבחתא ונחמתא
 דאמירן בעלמא,
 ואמרו אמן.

יהא שלמא רבא מן שמיא וחיים
 עלינו ועל כל-ישראל,
 ואמרו אמן.

עשה שלום במרומי
 הוא יעשה שלום
 עלינו ועל כל-ישראל
 [ועל כל-יושבי תבל].
 ואמרו אמן.



Mourners' Kaddish

May God's great name be exalted and hallowed throughout the created world, as is God's wish. May God's sovereignty soon be established, in your lifetime and in your days, and in the days of all the House of Israel. And respond with: Amen.

May God's great name be acknowledged forever and ever!

May the name of the Holy One be acknowledged and celebrated, lauded and worshipped, exalted and honored, extolled and acclaimed—though God, who is blessed, b'rikh hu, is truly far beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And respond with: Amen.

May abundant peace from heaven, and life, come to us and to all Israel. And respond with: Amen.

May the One who brings harmony on high, bring harmony to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth].

And respond with: Amen.

Yitgaddal v'yitkaddash sh'meih rabba, b'alma di v'ra, ki-r'uteih, v'yamlikh malkhuteih b'hayyeikhon u-v'yomeikhon u-v'hayyei d'khol beit yisra-el, ba-agala u-viz'man kariv, v'imru amen.

Congregation joins in:

Y'hei sh'meih rabba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

*Yitbarakh v'yishtabbah v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yitnassei v'yit-haddar v'yit-alleh v'yit-hallal sh'meih d'kudsah, b'rikh hu, *l'eilla min kol birkhata v'shirata
**leilla l'eilla mi-kol birkhata v'shirata
tushb'hata v'nehamata da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.*

Y'hei sh'lama rabba min sh'mayya v'hayyim aleinu v'al kol yisra-el, v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bi-m'romav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisra-el [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil], v'imru amen.

* Sukkot, Passover, Shavuot

** High Holidays



Remembrance

Yizkor is for letting the music come back, softly and sweetly. Yizkor is to hush us and to heal us, because we are very tired under the burden which death has brought. Yizkor is to hush us with the quiet strength of prayer. Yizkor is to heal us with the wisdom that death gives urgency to life. Then sit quiet, without bitter tears, and let the silence flow in, bringing more love than grief, more gratitude than rebellion.

— *Rabbi Jacob Philip Rudin*

They Never Quite Leave Us

They never quite leave us, our friends who have passed through the shadows of death to the sunlight above;
A thousand sweet memories are holding them fast
to the places they blessed with their presence and love.
The work which they left and the books which they read
speak mutely, though still with an eloquence rare,
And the songs that they sang, the words that they said,
yet linger and sing on the desolate air.

— *Author Unknown*

Prayer for Those Whose Parents Are Living

Almighty God, while those who have lost their parents and their dear ones call to mind those who have gone to their eternal rest, I, at this solemn moment, raise my eyes to You, the Giver of Life, and from a grateful heart, thank You for Your mercy in having preserved the life of my beloved father and mother.

May it be Your will, O Lord my God and God of my ancestors, to bless them with health and strength, so that they may be with me for many years to come. Bless them even as they have blessed me, and guard them even as they have guarded me.

In return for all their love, affection, and the sacrifices which they have made for me, may I bring them joy and lighten their cares. May it be my privilege to help them in every way that lies within my power; may I learn to understand and recognize the duty I owe to them. Amen

— *Rabbi Arnold Stiebel (adapted)*



A Meditation In Memory of a Parent Who Was Hurtful

Dear God, You know my heart.

Indeed, You know me better than I know myself, so I turn to You before I rise for Kaddish.

Help me, O God, to subdue my bitter emotions that do me no good, and to find that place in myself where happier memories may lie hidden, and where grief for all that could have been, all that should have been, may be calmed by forgiveness, or at least be soothed by the passage of time.

I pray that You, who raises up slaves to freedom, will liberate me from the oppression of my hurt and anger, and that You will lead me from this desert to Your holy place. Amen.

– *Rabbi Robert Saks*

Prayer After a Miscarriage

God, we are weary and grieved. We were anticipating the birth of a child, but the promise of life was ended too soon. Our arms yearned to cradle new life, our mouths to sing soft lullabies. Our hearts ache from the emptiness and the silence. We are saddened and we are angry. We weep and we mourn. Weep with us, God, Creator of Life, for the life that could not be.

Source of healing, help us to find healing, among those who care for us and those for whom we care. Shelter us under wings of love and help us to stand up again for life even as we mourn our loss.

Blessed are You, God, who brings the dead to everlasting life.

Barukh ata Adonai m'chayeh ha-meitim.

May my child come to his/her resting place in peace.

– *Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso*



We Wait Too Long

Death has claimed a loved one,
Thus reminding us of our own mortality.

Our days on earth are limited;
We know not to whom the morrow belongs.

Yet we often postpone for the future
Deeds which should be performed today.

We wait too long to show kindness,
To speak words of gratitude and concern.

We wait too long to set aside hatreds,
To banish petty grievances and resentments.

We wait too long to forgive the hurts we have suffered,
And to ask forgiveness for those we have inflicted.

We wait too long to set aside selfishness,
To give of our time and to share our bounty.

We wait too long to expand our horizons,
To enlarge our minds, to nourish our souls.

We wait too long to make the most of our gifts,
To nurture creative spirits, to strive for growth.

We wait too long to give the love
Which may no longer be needed tomorrow.

We wait too long to discipline ourselves,
To master and take charge of our lives.

We wait too long to become better Jews,
More learned, more devoted, more caring.

In tribute to our departed, let us now resolve
To wait no longer, to delay no more;

Rather, let us begin to do now,
Those good things which can be done today.

— *Author Unknown*



Take My Hand

When all seems dark and the darkness is harsh,
Take my hand.
When I cannot see light even in the brightest of day,
Give me your hand.
When I am tired and every breath is heavy,
Take my hand.
When my words do not grasp the depth of yearning in my soul,
Give me your hand.
When my feelings are overwhelming or dulled
Take my hand.
When I am confused and don't know what to do,
Give me your hand.
So that we may be together.
Take my hand.

– *Author Unknown*

We Need One Another

We need one another when we mourn and would be comforted.
We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid.
We need one another when we are in despair, in temptation,
and need to be recalled to our best selves again.
We need one another when we would accomplish some great
purpose, and cannot do it alone.
We need one another in the hour of success, when we look for
someone to share our triumphs.
We need one another in the hour of defeat, when with
encouragement we might endure, and stand again.
We need one another when we come to die, and would have
gentle hands prepare us for the journey.
All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.
We best live when we bring to one another our understanding and
our solace.

– *George Odell*



For a Grandmother

My mother's mother died in the spring of her years,
And her daughters 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 treasure 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.

– *Lee Goldberg translated by Marcia Falk*

If Only If Only

If only we could see the splendor of the land,
to which our loved ones are called from you and me,
we'd understand.

If only we could hear the welcome they receive,
from old familiar voices all so dear,
We would not grieve.

If only we could know the reason why they went
we'd smile and wipe away the tears that flow
and wait content.

– *Author Unknown*



Sweet Memories

*In memory of my husband, John Anselmo
(April 29, 1930 – May 22, 2003)*

In quiet times I often sit, And find my mind adrift
To another place, another time, And oh! My spirits lift!

I see your happy, smiling face, And that twinkle in your eye.

I hear you sing your favorite song, And I laugh...and then I cry.
Inside my heart Sweet Memories, Stay with me each day
I cherish, and I cling to them, For I miss you in every way.

Each thing I see, Each thing I do brings you close to me
For everything upon this earth, Brings Sweet Memories of you.

I imagine our reunion, Some day at heaven's gate
It fills my heart with happiness, But for now, I'll have to wait.

Until my life upon this earth, And my work here is complete
Sweet Memories will keep me, Until at last again we meet.

– Charlotte Anselmo

Feel No Guilt in Laughter

Feel no guilt in laughter, he'd know how much you care.
Feel no sorrow in a smile that he is not here to share.
You cannot grieve forever; he would not want you to.
He'd hope that you could carry on the way you always do.
So, talk about the good times and the way you showed you cared,
The days you spent together, all the happiness you shared.
Let memories surround you, a word someone may say
Will suddenly recapture a time, an hour, a day,
That brings him back as clearly as though he were still here,
And fills you with the feeling that he is always near.
For if you keep those moments, you will never be apart
And he will live forever locked safely within your heart.

– Author Unknown



Touching Shoulders

There's a comforting thought at the close of the day,
 When I'm weary and lonely and sad,
 That sort of grips hold of my crusty old heart
 And bids it be merry and glad.
 It gets in my soul and it drives out the blues,
 And finally thrills through and through.
 It is just a sweet memory that chants the refrain:
 "I'm glad I touched shoulders with you!"

Did you know you were brave, did you know you were strong?
 Did you know there was one leaning hard?
 Did you know that I waited and listened and prayed,
 And was cheered by your simplest word?
 Did you know that I longed for that smile on your face,
 For the sound of your voice ringing true?
 Did you know I grew stronger and better because
 I had merely touched shoulders with you?

I am glad that I live, that I battle and strive
 For the place that I know I must fill;
 I am thankful for sorrows, I'll meet with a grin
 What fortune may send, good or ill.
 I may not have wealth, I may not be great,
 But I know I shall always be true,
 For I have in my life that courage you gave
 When once I rubbed shoulders with you.

— *Author Unknown*

Remember Me

To the living, I am gone. To the sorrowful, I will never return. To the angry, I was cheated. But to the happy, I am at peace. And to the faithful, I have never left. I cannot speak, but I can listen. I cannot be seen, but I can be heard. So remember me in your heart, your thoughts and your memories. Of the times we loved. The times we cried. The times we fought and the times we laughed. For if you always think of me, I will never be gone.

— *Margaret Mead*



You Are A Light

You are a light
Inside my soul
Inside my heart
So full of hope
Your light shines in
My memory
I honor you
As part of me

I still remember all the things about your smile
The way you always made me feel
Those little things we did together in our time
In me your energy is real

You are a light
Inside my soul
Inside my heart
So full of hope
Your light shines in
My memory
I honor you
As part of me

Having had you in my life is such a gift to me
I know you didn't want to leave
My life goes on, and I change and grow and learn
I know that's what you'd want for me

You are a light
Inside my soul
Inside my heart
So full of hope
Your light shines in
My memory
I honor you
As part of me

– Louise Dimiceli-Mitran



Before I Go

When my life has reached its very end,
And I take that final breath;
I want to know I've left behind,
Some "good" before my death.

I hope that in my final hour,
In all honesty I can say:
That somewhere in my lifetime,
I have brightened someone's day.

That maybe I have brought a smile
To someone else's face,
And made one moment a little sweeter
While they dwelled here in this place.

Lord, please be my reminder
And whisper softly in my ear...
To be a "giver," not a "taker,"
In the years I have left here.

Give to me the strength I need,
Open up my mind and my soul...
That I might show sincere compassion,
And love to others before I go.

For if not a heart be touched by me,
And not a smile was left behind...
Then the life that I am blessed with,
Will have been a waste of time.

With all my heart, I truly hope
To leave something here on earth...
That touched another, made them smile
And gave to my life...worth.

— *Author Unknown*



Death is Not the Enemy

I often feel that death is not the enemy of life, but its friend; for it is the knowledge that our years are limited which makes them so precious. It is the truth that time is but lent to us which makes us, at our best, look upon our years as a trust handed into our temporary keeping.

We are like children privileged to spend a day in a great park, a park filled with many gardens and playgrounds, and azure-tinted lakes and boats sailing upon tranquil waves.

True, the day allotted to each of us is not the same in length, in light, in beauty. Some children of the earth are privileged to spend a long and sunlit day in the garden of the earth. For others, the day is shorter, cloudier, and dusk descends more quickly as in a winter's tale.

But whether our life is a long summery day or a shorter wintry afternoon, we know that inevitably there are storms and squalls which overcast even the bluest heaven and there are sunlit rays which pierce the darkest autumn sky. The day we are privileged to spend in the great park of life is not the same for all human beings; but there is enough beauty and joy and gaiety in the hours, if we but treasure them.

Then for each of us the moment comes when the great nurse, death, takes us by the hand and quietly says, "It is time to go home. Night is coming. It is your bedtime, child of the earth. Come, you are tired. Lie down at last in the quiet nursery of nature and sleep. Sleep well. The day is gone. Stars shine in the canopy of eternity."

— *Joshua L. Leibman*



Bread and Music

Music I heard with you was more than music,
 And bread I broke with you was more than bread;
 Now that I am without you, all is desolate;
 All that was once so beautiful is dead.
 Your hands once touched this table and this silver,
 And I have seen your fingers hold this glass.
 These things do not remember you, beloved,
 And yet your touch upon them will not pass.
 For it was in my heart you moved among them,
 And blessed them with your hands and with your eyes;
 And in my heart they will remember always,
 They knew you once, O beautiful and wise.

— *Conrad Aiken*

Remembrance

This memory of my mother stays with me
 Throughout the years: the way she used to stand
 Framed in the door when any of her band
 Of children left . . . as long as she could see
 Their forms, she gazed, as if she seemed to be
 Trying to guard — to meet some far demand;
 And then before she turned to tasks at hand,
 She breathed a little prayer inaudibly.

And now, I think, in some far heavenly place,
 She watches still, and yet is not distressed,
 But rather as one who, after life's long race,
 Has found contentment in a well-earned rest,
 There, in a peaceful dreamlike reverie,
 She waits, from earthly cares forever free.

— *Cantor Margaret E. Bruner*



God, Make Me Brave For Life

God, make me brave for life; oh, braver than this.
 Let me straighten after pain, as a tree straightens after the rain,
 Shining and lovely again.
 God, make me brave for life, much braver than this.
 As the blown grass lifts, let me rise from sorrow with quiet eyes,
 Knowing Your way is wise.
 God, make me brave, life brings such blinding things.
 Help me to keep my sight; Help me to see aright
 That out of dark comes light.

— *Grace Noll Crowell*

A Psalm of Life

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
 Life is but an empty dream,
 For the soul is dead that slumbers
 And things are not what they seem.
 Life is real! Life is earnest!
 And the grave is not its goal;
 Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
 Was not spoken of the soul.

— *H.W. Longfellow*

When I Am Gone

When I am gone what will you do?
 Who will write and draw for you?
 Someone smarter—someone new?
 Someone better—maybe YOU!

— *Shel Silverstein*

How Did It Get So Late?

“How did it get so late so soon? It's night before it's afternoon.
 December is here before it's June. My goodness how the time has flown.
 How did it get so late so soon?”

— *Dr. Seuss*



Death: A Haven to the Weary

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 as 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 grief. Turn us anew towards 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 promise of life.

— *Reform Movement clergy manual*

September

I have only slipped away into the next room, I am I, and you are you. Whatever we were to each other that we are still. Call me by my old, familiar name, speak to me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into 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 effort, without the ghost of a shadow on it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as 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.

— *Rev. Henry Scott Holland*



Courage

Adonai, bless me with courage.
 Help me gain strength from You.
 Life has a way of handing us surprises
 that take an amazing amount of courage to overcome.
 Create in me a clear and steady focus,
 a heart that is filled with the awareness that
 Adonai is with me.
 On the sunniest day and in the darkest night
 I will be whatever life demands of me.
 Courage is my knowledge of You.

— Anita Moise Rosefield Rosenberg

Excerpt from “Let There Be You”

And they say to me, We are sorry for your loss.
 And I say to myself, ‘me too, me too’.
 Because what I know now is that
 when love takes a hold of your heart,
 it gives a piece of you away,
 and when that disappears,
 that empty space aches.
 You can’t fill it.
 You can’t drown it.
 You can’t forget it.
 You can’t ignore it.
 There’s just space and you have to let it be.

— Rev. Sarah Are

When we are dead, and people weep for us and grieve, let it be
 because we touched their lives with beauty and simplicity. Let it not
 be said that life was good to us, but rather, that we were good to life.

— Rabbi Jacob Philip Rudin



With Our Lives We Give Life

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.

As night follows day, the candle of our life burns down. There is an end to the flames. Yet we do not despair, for we are more than a memory slowly fading into the darkness. With our lives we give life.

Early or late, all must answer the summons to return to the Reservoir of Being. For we loosen 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.

— *Gates of Prayer*

The Meditations of Our Hearts

The meditations of our hearts are not always “acceptable”
To you, O God, or even to ourselves.

Sometimes our thoughts are bitter with anger,
and sometimes they are sour with remorse.
Sometimes they are dark with doubt,
and sometimes they are heavy with despair.

We acknowledge that we are creatures of many moods,
and that when we face the loss of a loved one,
our emotions may reflect our inner turmoil and deep distress.

Help us to cope with our feelings, with honesty and with patience.
Help us to ponder the immediate in the perspective of the eternal.

In our days of pain and anguish, in our nights of tearful sorrow,
give us faith, O God, to trust in Your healing power.

Help us to draw strength from the assurance
that Your loving kindness has not departed from us;
that we will know yet again the blessings of serenity and peace.

— *Author Unknown*



The Rose Talked Back (edited)

The man sweeping the synagogue paused for a moment. He looked at the flowers lying about in disorder. "What a waste!" he said aloud. Those roses had adorned the pulpit at a wedding an hour before. Now all was over and they were waiting to be placed in the rubbish. The man leaning on his sweeper was lost in thought when suddenly he heard a strange sound. One of the roses replied to him.

Do you call this a waste?" the flower protested. "What is life anyway, yours or mine, but a means of service to others. My mission was to create some fragrance and beauty, and when I have fulfilled it, my life has not been wasted. And what greater privilege is there than to adorn a bride's way to her beloved? What greater privilege than to help glorify the moment when a couple seal their faith in each other by entering the covenant of marriage?"

The little flower paused for a moment to watch the man's face, and then continued its discourse.

Roses are like people; they live in deeds, not in time. My glory was but for a brief hour, but you should have seen the joy in the couple's eyes. I like to believe that I had something to do with it, by creating a suitable setting for the moment of their supreme happiness. So don't grieve for me, as my life has been more than worthwhile.

Having spoken her piece the rose was once more silent. The man, startled from his reverie, and now a little wiser, moved along with his work, now enjoying the aroma of the many flowers in his path. Though they would soon be discarded, rather than sweeping them up, he now gathered them gently and placed them among the bed of flowers outdoors where they could return, in their last hours, to the soil of the garden.

— Rabbi Ben Zion Bokser



My Hereafter

Do not come when I am dead to sit beside a low green mound,
or bring the first gay daffodils because I love you so,
for I shall not be there.

You cannot find me there.

I will look up at you from the eyes of little children;
I will bend to meet you in the swaying boughs of bud-thrilled trees,
and caress you with the passionate sweep of storm-filled winds;
I will give you strength in your upward tread of everlasting hills;
I will cool your tired body in the flow of the limpid river;
I will warm your work-glorified hands through the glow of winter
fire, and I will soothe you into forgetfulness to the drop, drop of
the rain on the roof.

I will speak to you out of the rhymes of the Masters;
I will dance with you in the lilt of the violin, and make your heart
leap with the bursting cadence of the organ;
I will flood your soul with the flaming radiance of the sunrise, and
bring you peace in the tender rose and gold of the after-sunset.
All these have made me happy.
They are a part of me, I shall become part of them.

— *Juanita de Long*

Death Will Come

Death will come;
We cannot enter into judgment with it.
Our question – “why” – will always go unanswered.
But this does not mean that we are helpless in the face of death.
We can – and we do – rob death of ultimate victory
by living our lives,
so that when death comes, it takes us from a world,
one corner of which is a little better,
because we were there.

— *Author Unknown*



I Am Older Now: A Yahrzeit Candle Lit at Home

The Yahrzeit candle is different,
announcing neither Sabbath nor festival.

No benediction recited. No song sung. No psalm mandated.

Before this unlit candle without a quorum, I stand, unstruck match
in my hand.

It is less distant now, the remembrance ritual of parents deceased.

I am older now, closer to their age than before.

I am older now, their aches in my body, their white hairs beneath
my shaved skin, their wrinkles creased into my face.

It is less distant now; this ritual once made me think of them. Now
makes me think of me.

Once it recalled relationships to them. Now it ponders on my
children's relationship to me.

Once I wondered what to remember of them. Now I ask what my
children remember of me, what smile, what grimace.

What stories they will tell their children of me?

It is less distant now.

How would I be remembered? How would I be mourned?

Will they come to the synagogue?

I light a candle, recite the Kaddish.

It is less distant now.

Once Yahrzeit was about parents deceased,

Now it is of children alive.

Once it was about a distant past,

Now it is about tomorrow.

— *Rabbi Harold M. Schulweis*



Mourning Is the Price We Pay

Mourning is the price we pay for having the courage to love others. Even in grief, we know that the wonder of human life is too complex, and too magnificent to be memorialized in endless pain.

The gifts of spirit our loved ones gave us cannot be measured or weighed, nor can they be lost or even tarnished by time. Even in our darkest hours, we know that some of their light and their warmth will always be with us, bringing comfort and courage and – in the fullness of time – healing and peace.

– *Irvin Yalom*

‘Tis a Fearful Thing

‘Tis a fearful thing to love what death can touch. A fearful thing to love, to hope, to dream, to be – to be, And oh, to lose.

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

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

To remember this brings painful joy.

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

– *Yehuda HaLevi*

**What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose.
For all that we love deeply becomes a part of us.**

– *Helen Keller*



What Death Cannot Take From Us

Death has cast its dark shadow over this home,
And it has left us all deeply bereft.

A voice has been stilled, a heart has been stopped,
Laughter has departed, joy has fled.

Gone are the warmth and the glow of a loved one's presence;
The chain of love has lost a vital link.

Death has taken a life which was precious;
It has brought pain, loneliness and sorrow.

And yet there is so much which death cannot touch,
So much over which it has no dominion.

Death cannot rob us of our past:
The years, the dreams, the experiences which we shared.

Death cannot take from us the love we knew;
It is woven into the tapestry of our lives.

The lessons we were taught we shall continue to cherish;
We shall cling to the wisdom which lives on.

What we have had, we shall always possess;
What we have known, we shall always hold dear.

Death cannot take from us our abiding trust,
That God will give us strength to ensure what we must.

Death cannot take from us our sustaining hope –
That darkness will yield to light, and hurt give way to healing.

Death cannot take from us the comforting faith,
That with God every soul is precious; none is ever lost.

Thus, even in sorrow, we thank the Lord our God,
For our memories and our hopes, for our trust and our faith.

For these, we believe, need never be lost;
These, and so much more, death cannot take from us.

– Author Unknown



When Great Trees Fall

When great trees fall,
rocks on distant hills shudder,
lions hunker down in tall grasses,
and even elephants lumber after safety.

When great trees fall in forests,
small things recoil into silence,
their senses eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,
the air around us becomes light, rare, sterile.
We breathe, briefly.
Our eyes, briefly, see with a hurtful clarity.
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,
examines, gnaws on kind words unsaid,
promised walks never taken.

Great souls die and our reality, bound to them,
takes leave of us.
Our souls, dependent upon their nurture, now shrink, wizened.
Our minds, formed and informed by their radiance, fall away.
We are not so much maddened as reduced to the unutterable
ignorance of dark, cold caves.

And when great souls die, after a period, peace blooms,
slowly and always irregularly.
Spaces fill with a kind of soothing electric vibration.
Our senses, restored, never to be the same, whisper to us.

They existed. They existed.
We can be. Be and be better.
For they existed.

— *Maya Angelou*



The Crown Of A Good Name

There are three crowns, our Sages taught:
The crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood,
and the crown of royalty;
But the crown of a good name excels them all.

“Blessed is the person who lives with a good name
And departs this world with a good name.”

Of such a person did the Bible say:
“A good name is to be treasured above precious oil.”
Wealth, like health, may pass away,
But a good name can live on forever.

It can adorn a person throughout life;
It can be bequeathed as a precious inheritance,

Conferring honor on family and friends,
Inspiring and challenging those who carry on.

Therefore our ancient Sages taught:
“The righteous need no monuments;
Their good deeds are their memorials.”

The earth of the grave does not cover them;
The hand of time does not erase them.

The kindness they have shown, the love they have given,
Remain in everlasting remembrance.

Their achievements are more lasting than granite.
Their devotion is an enduring legacy.

— *Author Unknown*



Reading

When my loved one is taken from me, shall I mourn?
When my dear one departs forever,
shall I wail and rend my flesh as I do my garment?
No! That is not the way.

I may find the road ahead lonely.
I may dread tomorrow without that voice, without that smile.
I may not know whence will come the courage to continue.
Yet I shall not despair!

I shall praise God who gave me my beloved.
I shall sing unto God who enables us to love.
I shall voice thanks for what I have had.
I will refuse to become bitter over what I shall lack.

When my loved one leaves me, I shall indeed shed tears.
Yet, even then, I shall utter a hymn –
A song of joy for what has been.

BARUCH ATAH ADONAI!

Praised are You, O God!

You have allowed me to know love;

You have granted me an eternal treasure.

– *Rabbi Simcha Kling*

Birthday

The last movie we saw with you has been nominated for an award
— you're not here to say I told you so.

The retractable back scratcher and chocolate bar
we were going to bring to you,
gifts picked up in the drugstore checkout line,
rest on the table by the door, getting dusty.

We talk of the things you tended on the earth.
The barbecue, the deck, the grape arbors
and the rain barrels to feed them,
the sprouts growing in the greenhouse.

(continued on next page)



The trails, the coastlines,
the crooked roads you led us down.
The big unfettered sound of your amusement.

Slowly, we begin to see the story in the black-and-white
photographs: the worried child you always were,
your knit brows and hopeful smile as if asking,
Is everything all right?
Did I do something wrong?
You were supposed to get better.

We baked a cake for you
and we brought it to the place you loved
and scattered the pieces like ashes.
It was your birthday without you.

– Sally Charette

We Are Loved...

We are loved by an unending love.
We are embraced by arms that find us
even when we are hidden from ourselves.
We are touched by fingers that soothe us.
even when we are too proud for soothing.
We are counseled by voices that guide us
even when we are too embittered to hear.

We are loved by an unending love.
We are supported by hands that uplift us
even in the midst of a fall.
We are urged on by eyes that meet us
even when we are too weak for meeting.

We are loved by an unending love.
Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled.
Ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices.
Ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles.
We are loved by an unending love.

– Rabbi Rami Shapiro



When Will I Be Myself Again?

“When will I be myself again?”

Some Tuesday, perhaps,
In the late afternoon,

Sitting quietly with a cup of tea
And a cookie;

Or Wednesday, same time or later,

You will stir from a nap and see her;
You will pick up the phone to call her;

You will hear her voice – unexpected advice –
And maybe argue.

And you will not be frightened,
And you will not be sad,
And you will not be alone,
Not alone at all,

And your tears will warm you.

But not today,
And not tomorrow,
And not tomorrow’s tomorrow,

But some day,
Some Tuesday, late in the afternoon,

Sitting quietly with a cup of tea
And a cookie

And you will be yourself again.

– *Rabbi Lewis J. Eron*



With Every Death

With every death we become someone new.
Defined and changed by loss and absence.

Once married. Once a parent.
Once a sibling. Once a child.
Once a friend.

Now single. Now childless.
Now only. Now orphaned.
Now friendless.

Remade permanently, by illness or accident,
over the course of years, or months, or even seconds.

Left with grief, and the horrible realization that we are now
forced to become someone new, against our wishes, without those
we love.

They die, and we are left the sacred challenge of being born.

– *Rabbi Melinda Panken*

You Are a Part of Us Forever

To this sacred place we come, drawn by the eternal ties that bind our soul to yours. Death has separated us. You are no longer at our side to share the beauty of the passing moment. We cannot look to you to lighten our burdens, to lend us your strength, your counsel, your faith. And yet what you mean to us neither withers nor fades. For a time we touched hands and heart; still your voice abides within us, still your tender glance remains a joy to us. For you are a part of us forever; something of you has become a deathless song upon our lips. And so beyond the ache that tells us how much we miss you, a deeper thought compels – we were together. We hold you still in our minds, and give thanks for life and love. The happiness that was, the memories that do not fade are gifts that cannot be lost. You continue to bless our days and years. We will always give thanks to you.

– *Rabbi Chayim Stern*



Reflection

How do we face the reality of death?
 We know that it is a fact. It is a part of life.
 We may postpone it.
 We may try to delay it as much as possible.
 But some day we must be confronted by it.
 How do we face the reality of death?
 By giving thanks to God for the gift of life.
 By voicing appreciation for the blessings we have known.
 By being grateful for those lives that have touched ours
 And whose echoes still resound in us.
 May the Kaddish, we now recite,
 Be not only a remembrance of those no longer with us,
 But also a reminder of how we should live
 And the values that we should represent.

— *Rabbi Simcha Kling*

Eulogy for One Remembered

Not the wisest
 Not the smartest
 Not the kindest
 Not the most tactful
 Not the richest
 Not the most successful
 Not the tallest
 Not the bravest
 But my own.

— *Author Unknown*

Meditations

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

— *Author Unknown*



On Death

You would know the secret of death.
 But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?
 The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil
 the mystery of light.
 If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide
 unto the body of life.
 For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.
 In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;
 And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.
 Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gate to eternity.
 Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands
 before the king whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour.
 Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the
 mark of the king?
 Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?
 For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?
 And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless
 tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?
 Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.
 And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb.
 And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.

– *Kahlil Gibran*

The Yahrzeit Glass (abridged)

The wick in the wax that fills the glass is lit.
 In silence I observe, each flicker, a flashback to a recalled gesture.
 And at the end of the day after wax is cleansed,
 washed out, the plain glass remains...
 I recall my grandfather drinking hot tea from that very glass,
 a spoon in the glass to prevent it from cracking from the heat.
 Here, glass that once contained wax in memory of the deceased,
 now holds tea and milk and coffee, held to the lips,
 its contents swallowed, absorbed.
 What loving memory to know that my beloved continues
 to nurture me posthumously, a love that outlives yesterday.

– *Rabbi Harold Schulweis*



Alone Together

No one knows my grief, *nor*
Treasures my private memory.
I mourn alone.

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

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

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

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

The Kaddish requires community.
A Kaddish must be answered.
A Kaddish calls for response.
Together we answer:
Y'hei sh'mei rabah m'vorach.

— *Author Unknown*



We Remember Them

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 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 theirs,
we remember them.*

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

– Rabbi Sylvan Kamens and Rabbi Jack Riemer



Excerpt from The Little Prince

If you love a flower that lives on a star, it is sweet to look at the sky at night. All the stars are a-blossom with flowers.

And at night you will look up at the stars. Where I live, everything is so small that I cannot show you where my star is to be found. It is better like that. My star will just be one of the stars, for you. And so you will love to watch all of the stars in the heavens. They will be your friends.

All men have the stars, but they are not the same things for different people. For some, who are travellers, these stars are guides. For others, they are no more than little lights in the sky.

But all these stars are silent. You – you alone – will have the stars as no one else has them and in one of the stars, I shall be living. In one of them, I shall be laughing when you look at the sky at night.

And when your sorrow is comforted, for time soothes all sorrows, you will be content that you have known me. You will always be my friend. You will want to laugh with me. And you will sometimes open your window, just for that pleasure.

– *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry*





Our Lives Matter

We come together from the diversity of our grieving,
to gather in the warmth of this community
giving stubborn witness to our belief that
in times of sadness, there is room for laughter.
In times of darkness, there always will be light.
May we hold fast to the conviction
that what we do with our lives matters
and that a caring world is possible after all.

– *M. Maureen Killoran*

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Brandon Dann Rotstein

Charles Dann

Audrey Dann

Debra Dann Kay

The Rotstein, Dann and Kay Families

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The Schneider, Flaxman, Goodman, Lipsitz,
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Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me...