

Yizkor

WE RECALL

Some of us recall parents who gave us life, who cared for us and nurtured us and who taught us to take our first steps on our own.

Some of us remember a wife, husband, or partner—our friend and lover—with whom we shared so much of our lives, our failures and achievements, joys and sorrows, intimate secrets.

Some of us recall brothers and sisters, who matured together with us, sometimes competing with us, and sometimes encouraging us on, bound to us by a life-long relationship.

Some of us remember children, entrusted to us too briefly, to whom we gave our loving care and from whom we received a trust that enriched our lives. Their memory is always with us.

Many of us recall relatives who knew us, teachers who affected us, and beloved friends who walked beside us in life, guiding us, listening to us, supporting us.

Our lives are shaped by those who were alongside us as we walked on our path.

May our inheritance impel us to strive to live lives of holiness and service. May memories of love inspire us to love; may painful memories impel us to mitigate the pain others experience. And may we be granted the strength to affirm life's meaning, even in the face of death.

Yizkor is recited on the last day of the Festival.

Some people whose parents are living have a custom of leaving the service at this time, but even those who do not yet need to say the personal prayers of remembrance might remain and recite prayers for others as well as join in the communal prayers (beginning on page 336 below).

יהוה, מה אדם ויתדעהו,
בן אנוש ויתחשבהו.
אדם להבל דמה,
ימיו כצל עובר.
בבקר יצוץ וחרף,
לערב ימולל ויבש.
למנות ימינו כן הודע
ונביא לבב חכמה.

ADONAI, what are human beings
that You take account of them,
mortals that You care for them?

Humans are as a breath,
their days like a passing shadow.

In the morning they flourish anew;
in the evening they shrivel and die.

Teach us to count each day,
that we may acquire a heart of wisdom.

INTRODUCTION. Yizkor is a time set aside to formally include in our thoughts and prayers family and friends who have passed away. In reciting Yizkor, the veil between the worlds of the living and the dead becomes more transparent. For some, memories of family and friends evoked by the festival add to our sense of fullness and peace. For some, those memories bring sadness at the loss of those we loved. For still others, these memories may be disquieting. Whatever our circumstances, as we travel through the cycle of the year, the people who were once with us in person travel with us in spirit.

The opening to a heavenly world, which Yizkor evokes, is symbolized by holding a Torah during the service and our standing as we recite the prayers recalling those who have died. Some communities begin doing so as these opening meditations are recited; some do so when the personal prayers for the departed are recited (page 335).

WHAT ARE HUMAN BEINGS מה אדם. The verses in this passage come from Psalms 144:3–4, 90:6, and 90:12.

WE RECALL. A prayer written by Mordecai M. Kaplan, Eugene Kohn, and Ira Eisenstein, and adapted here.

שְׁוִי־תִי יְהוָה לְגִגְדִי תָמִיד,
 בִּי מִיְמִינִי בֶּל אֲמוּט.
 לָכֵן שָׂמַח לְבִי וַיִּגַּל כְּבוֹדִי,
 אֲף בְּשָׂרִי יִשְׁכֵּן לְבָטָח.

תהלים טז:ח-ט

ADONAI is always before me,
 at my right hand, lest I fall.
 Therefore I am glad, made happy,
 though I know that my flesh
 will lie in the ground
 forever.

Psalms 16:8-9

A PERSONAL MEDITATION

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 senses 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.

MY FATHER COMMANDED ME NOT TO DIE

But my father, before he died, commanded me not to die.
Never to stop breathing.
Only to seem silent, while my soul secretly continues to be suspended in the ether.
So I go on living. I will not stop living. Neither non-existence nor fear, nor closely-knit woven gloom, its cloth cloaking the sun, will make me tremble,
not the emptiness with which my loved ones leave me, silently taken one by one.
I continue to breathe and with my breath, I give life to birds, wild beasts,
shreds of sky, clumps of clay.

—RIVKA MIRIAM

*The deaths of those we now recall
left holes in our lives,
but we are grateful for the gift of their love.
May their memory, recalled this day,
be a blessing for us
and all who come to know us.*

MEMORIAL PRAYERS

We rise.

We each continue in private meditation, selecting from among the following and adding appropriate names as indicated.

Personal prayers may be added.

In memory of male relatives or friends:

May God remember the soul of יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַשְׁמַת

my father _____ אָבִי מוֹרִי

my husband _____ אִישִׁי

my partner _____ בֶּן זוגִי

my brother _____ אָחִי

my son _____ בְּנִי

my grandfather _____ סִבִּי

my relative _____ קָרוֹבִי

my friend _____ חֵבְרִי

(others) _____

שְׁהֵלָה לְעוֹלָמוֹ\שְׁהֵלָה לְעוֹלָמָם.

הַנִּנִּי נוֹדֵב\נוֹדֵבֶת צְדָקָה בְּעַד הַזִּכָּרֹת

נִשְׁמָתוֹ\נִשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם.

אֲנִי תָהִי נִפְשׁוֹ צְרוּרָה\תְּהִינָה נִפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת

בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים וְתָהִי מְנוּחָתוֹ\מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד,

שֶׁבַע שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת־פָּנָיָה, נְעִימוֹת בִּימִינָה נֶצַח. אָמֵן.

who has/have gone to his/their eternal home. In loving testimony to his life/their lives, I pledge *tzedakah* to help perpetuate ideals important to him/them. Through such deeds, and through prayer and remembrance, may his soul/their souls 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.*

tzedakah צְדָקָה. The Yizkor service was called *seder matnat yad*, the service of expressing generosity on behalf of those who have died. That name comes from the closing line of the Torah reading for the final day of the pilgrimage festivals: "Every person giving a gift according to the blessing they have received from Adonai" (Deuteronomy 16:17). Offering charitable gifts and performing acts of justice, love, and care in memory of those who have died provide us with ways of honoring their memory and continuing their influence for good.

*A Yizkor 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.

My emotions swirl as I say
this prayer. The parent I re-
member was not kind to me.
His/her death left me with a
legacy of unhealed wounds,
of anger and of dismay that a
parent could hurt a child as I
was hurt.

I do not want to pretend
to a love or to a grief that I do
not feel, but I do want to do
what is right as a Jew and as
a child.

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 for-
giveness, or at least soothed
by the passage of time.

I pray that You, who raise
up slaves to freedom, will lib-
erate me from the oppression
of my hurt and anger, and that
You will lead me from this
desert to Your holy place.

—ROBERT SAKS

An Eternal Window

In a garden I once heard
a song or an ancient blessing.

And above the dark trees
a window is always lit, in
memory

of the face that looked out
of it,
and that face too

was in memory of another
lit window.

—YEHUDAH AMICHAH
(translated by Chana Bloch)

MEMORIAL PRAYERS

We rise.

*We each continue in private meditation, selecting from among the following
and adding appropriate names as indicated.*

Personal prayers may be added.

In memory of female relatives or friends:

May God remember the soul of יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַשְׁמַת

my mother _____ אִמִּי מוֹרְתִי

my wife _____ אִשְׁתִּי

my partner _____ בֵּת זוגִי

my sister _____ אֲחוֹתִי

my daughter _____ בָּתִּי

my grandmother _____ סִבִּתִּי

my relative _____ קְרוֹבָתִי

my friend _____ חֵבֶרְתִּי

(others) _____

שֶׁהָלַכָה לְעוֹלָמָהּ\שֶׁהָלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָן.

הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב\נוֹדֶבֶת צְדָקָה בְּעַד הַזְכָּרָת

נִשְׁמָתָהּ\נִשְׁמוֹתֶיהָ.

אֲנִי תֹהֵי נִפְשָׁה צְרוּרָה\תְּהִינָה נִפְשׁוֹתֶיהָ צְרוּרוֹת

בְּצִרוּר הַחַיִּים וְתֹהֵי מְנוּחָתָהּ\מְנוּחָתָן כָּבוֹד,

שֶׁבַע שְׁמָחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיהָ, נְעִימוֹת בִּימִינָךְ נִצָּח. אָמֵן.

who has/have gone to her/their eternal home. In loving
testimony to her life/their lives, I pledge *tzedakah* to help
perpetuate ideals important to her/them. Through such
deeds, and through prayer and remembrance, may
her soul/their souls 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.*

IN MEMORY OF CONGREGANTS

Some congregations add the following:

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַשְׁמוֹת יְדִידֵינוּ חֲבֵרֵי הַקֵּהָל הַקָּדוֹשׁ
הַזֶּה שֶׁהָלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם. אָנָּה תַּהְיֶינָה נַפְשוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת
בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים וְתִהְיֶי מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד, שְׂבַע שְׂמֻחוֹת
אֶת־פְּנֵיהֶ, נְעִימוֹת בְּיָמֵינוּ נְצַח. אָמֵן.

May God remember the souls of our friends, members of this holy congregation, who have gone to their eternal home. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life. May they rest in peace honored in God's presence. *Amen.*

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.

FOR MARTYRS AND THE SIX MILLION

Some congregations add the following:

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַשְׁמוֹת כָּל־אֲחֵינוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁמָּסְרוּ
אֶת־נַפְשָׁם עַל קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם, וְאֶת־הָאֲנָשִׁים נָשִׁים וְטַף,
שֶׁנִּחְנְקוּ וְשֶׁנִּשְׂרְפוּ וְשֶׁנִּהְרְגוּ בַּשּׂוֹאָה. בְּעֶבֶר שְׂאֵנוּ
מִתְפַּלְלִים בְּעֵד הַזְּכָרָת נִשְׁמָתָם. אָנָּה יִשְׁמַע בְּחַיֵּינוּ
יְהִי גְבוּרָתָם וּמַסִּירוֹתָם וְיִרְאָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂינֵנוּ טָהֹר לִבָּם,
וְתַהְיֶינָה נַפְשוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים וְתִהְיֶי
מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד, שְׂבַע שְׂמֻחוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵיהֶ, נְעִימוֹת
בְּיָמֵינוּ נְצַח. אָמֵן.

May God remember the souls of the martyrs of our people, who gave their lives for the sanctification of God's name, and the men women and children who were were slaughtered, burned, and killed in the Holocaust. In their memory we pray. May our lives reflect a measure of their bravery, dedication, and purity of soul. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life; may they be remembered with honor and may they rest in peace at Your right hand forever. *Amen.*

IN PARADISE עֵדֶן

Literally, "in the Garden of Eden." We imagine that the soul, which connects all living beings with their divine source, returns, after the death of the body, to God's care.

FOR THOSE WHO DIED IN DEFENSE OF THE STATE OF
ISRAEL AND IN ACTS OF TERROR

Some congregations add the following:

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נַשְׁמוֹת כָּל־אֲחֵינוּ וְאֲחֵיוֹתֵינוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
שֶׁהִקְרִיבוּ אֶת־נַפְשֵׁיהֶם בְּדֶרֶךְ לְהַקְמַת מְדִינַת יִשְׂרָאֵל
וּבְהַגְנָתָהּ, וְכָל־אֵלֶּה שֶׁנִּטְבְּחוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה חֲבָלָה. בַּעֲבוּר
שָׂאנוּ מִתְפַּלְלִים בְּעֵד הַזְכָּרָת נִשְׁמָתָם. אָנָּה נִזְכֹּר
לְעוֹלָם הַד גְּבוּרָתָם וּמִסִּירוֹתָם וּתְמִימוּתָם, וְתַהֲיִינָה
נַפְשֵׁיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים וְתִהְיֶי מְנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד,
שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בִּימִינְךָ נִצַּח. אָמֵן.

May God remember the souls of all those of the house of Israel who sacrificed themselves to establish the State of Israel, or who have perished in its defense, and those slaughtered in acts of terror. In their memory we pray. May the memory of their bravery, their dedication, and their innocence be with us throughout time. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life; may they be remembered with honor and may they rest in peace at Your right hand forever. *Amen.*

IN MEMORY OF ALL THE DEAD

אֵל מָלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים, הַמַּצֵּא מְנוּחָה נְכוֹנָה
תַּחַת כַּנְפֵי הַשְּׂכִינָה, בְּמַעְלוֹת קְדוּשִׁים וּטְהוּרִים,
בְּזֹהַר הַרְקִיעַ מְזֹהָרִים, לְנַשְׁמוֹת כָּל־אֵלֶּה שֶׁהִזְכַּרְנוּ
הַיּוֹם לְבִרְכָּהּ, שֶׁהָלְכוּ לְעוֹלָמָם, בְּגֵן עֵדֶן תִּהְיֶי מְנוּחָתָם.
אָנָּה בַּעַל הַרַחֲמִים, הַסֹּתִירָם בְּסֶתֶר כַּנְפֶיךָ לְעוֹלָמִים.
וְצִרוֹר בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת־נַשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם. יְהוָה הוּא נִחְלָתָם.
וְיִנּוּחוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹתֵיהֶם. וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן.

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.*

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד.

A PSALM OF DAVID

Mizmor l'david.

יְהוָה רֹעִי, לֹא אֶחָסֵר.

ADONAI is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Adonai ro-i lo eḥsar.

בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי, עַל מֵי מְנַחוֹת יִנְהַלֵּנִי.

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

Binot desheh yarbitzeini, al mei m'nuḥot y'nahaleini.

נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבָב, יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי צְדָק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ.

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

Nafshi y'shoveiv, yanḥeini v'maglei tzedek l'ma-an sh'mo.

גַּם כִּי אֵלֶךְ בְּגֵיא צִלְמוֹת

Though I walk through a valley as dark as death,

Gam ki eileikh b'gei tzalmavet

לֹא אִירָא רָע כִּי אַתָּה עִמָּדִי.

I fear no evil, for You are with me;

lo ira ra ki atah imadi.

שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֵמֵנִי.

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Shivt'kha u-mishantekha heimah y'naḥamuni.

תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֶגֶד צָרָי,

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

Ta-arokh l'fanai shulḥan neged tzor'rai,

דִּשְׁנַת בִּשְׁמֵן רֹאשִׁי בּוֹסִי רוֹיָה.

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

Dishanta va-shemen roshi, kosi r'vayah.

אֵךְ טוֹב וַחֲסֵד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי,

Only goodness and steadfast love shall pursue me

all the days of my life,

Akh tov va-ḥesed yird'funi kol y'mei ḥayai,

וְשָׁבְתִי בְּבֵית יְהוָה לְאָרְךָ יָמִים.

And I shall dwell in the house of ADONAI forever.

V'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orekh yamim.

Mourner's 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 we say: *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 beyond all acknowledgment and praise, or any expressions of gratitude or consolation ever spoken in the world. And we say: *Amen*.

May heaven bestow on us, and on all Israel, life and abundant and lasting peace. And we say: *Amen*.

May the one who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel [and to all who dwell on earth].

And we say: *Amen*.

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba, b'alma di v'ra, kiruteih,
v'yamlikh malkhuteih b'hayekhon u-v'yomeikhon
u-v'hayei d'khol beit yisrael, ba-agala u-vizman kariv,
v'imru amen.

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

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yitnasei v'yit-hadar
v'yitaleh v'yit-halal sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rikh hu,
l'eila min kol birkhata v'shirata tushb'hata v'nehamata
da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'hayim aleinu v'al kol yisrael,
v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu
v'al kol yisrael [v'al kol yosh'vei teiveil],
v'imru amen.

We are seated.

קדיש יתום

יִתְגַּדֵּל וַיִּתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא,
בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא, בְּרַעוּתֵהּ,
וַיִּמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעֻגְלָא וּבְזֶמַן קָרִיב,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרוֹמֵם וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא
וַיִּתְהַדָּר וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא,
לְעָלַם מִן כָּל־בְּרָכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא וְתַשְׁבְּחָתָא
וְנַחֲמָתָא דְאַמְיָרִין בְּעֻלְמָא,
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

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

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם
עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל [וְעַל כָּל־יוֹשְׁבֵי תִבְל],
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

We are seated.