

"Where does the soul go is a nonsensical question.

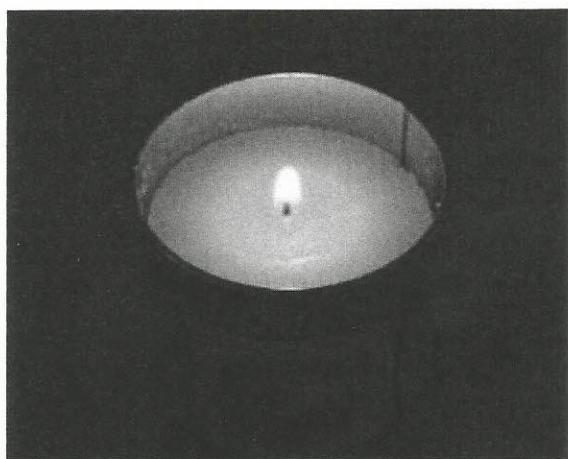
The soul is not physical.

Where does a dream go after it is dreamt?

Where does love go when it disappears?"

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz 1937 - 2020

(author of the 45-volume Steinsaltz Talmud translation)



Yizkor 5781

***Naming Our Grief;
Remembering our
Beloved;
Sanctifying Life***

***Temple Beth Torah
Ventura, CA
5 p.m.***

YIZKOR SERVICE

Rabbi: In the heart of Yom Kippur is a Yizkor Service. At a moment of hunger, spiritual exhaustion, and vulnerability, we push ourselves even further- to touch the most painful, raw, fearful place within ourselves. To confront mortality- of others, of our own beloved ones, of ourselves. Yizkor is the courage to face loss- and prevail.

Reader #1: Katrina Crenshaw- Upah

Eternal God, we ask Your help for our need is great.

Our days fly by in quick succession,

And we cannot look back without regret, or ahead without misgiving.

We seek to understand the mystery of our own lives,

But our effort is in vain.

And when suffering and death strike those we love,

Our faith all but fails us, and we forget that we are Your children.

God, help us now to feel your Presence.

When our own weaknesses and the storms of life hide You from our sight,

Help us to know that You are with us still.

Uphold us with the comfort of Your love.

Esai Einai- Psalm 121

Esai Einai el he-harim

Ei-ayin yavo ezri?

Ezri mei-im Adonai-

Oseih shamayim vaaretz.

I lift my eyes, to the hills.

From where will my help come?

My help, comes from Adonai

Maker of heaven and the earth.



Rabbi:

Grief in the Time of Covid; the Universal Season of Loss

Yizkor this year brings a different kind of grief. Even as we gather to remember our own loved ones, family and community members, there is a larger, extraordinary grief that abides within all of us. We have watched and witnessed death in the most disturbing, and unnatural of ways this year. Before us is a country that has lost more than 200,000 precious souls, in an unexpected contagion of suffocation and suffering. The death of one man- George Floyd- opened the door to a self-reckoning of so many other unnecessary deaths, lives lost that belie the truth that not all lives are regarded with the same sanctity that You our Creator have implanted within us. We are grieving the loss of togetherness. The moments of joy: weddings with guests lifting bride and groom on chairs, the joyous welcome of newborns with houses brimming with friends, the mazel tov to our bar and bat mitzvah teens, cried out from filled sanctuaries. We are grieving the loss of our rituals of grief: loved ones die and our community cannot even hold us up when our knees weaken, we are denied the hum of shiva in our own homes, denied loved ones who can travel to be with us for burial. Loss seems to be woven into the warp of the world; for some gradual, for others sudden, for some welcomed, for others tragic. The path through the Valley of Shadows is known to all of us.

Our Yizkor this day will speak to all of this grief- from the most universal to the most intimate. We will kindle 7 candles in our sanctuary and gather readings, music, and silence to guide us through this time.

Rabbi:



**The First Candle We Light
is in Memory of Those Who Have Died
From Covid-19.**

Reader # 2: Glory Page

My sister is not a statistic

Tomorrow, when the latest Deathometer of COVID is announced
in sonorous tones,
Whilst all the bodies still mount and curl towards the middle of the curve
Heaped one atop and alongside the other
My sister will be among those numbers, among the throwaway lines
Among the platitudes and lowered eyes,
an older person with underlying health conditions,
A pitiful way to lay rest the bare bones of a life.

My sister is not a statistic

Her underlying conditions were
Love
Kindness
Belief in the essential goodness of mankind
Uproarious laughter
Forgiveness
Compassion
A storyteller
A survivor
A comforter
A force of nature
And so much more

My sister is not a statistic

She died without the soft touch of a loved one's hand
Without the feathered kiss upon her forehead
Without the muted murmur of familiar family voices gathered around her bed,
Without the gentle roar of laughter that comes with memories recalled
Evoked from a time that already seems distant, when we were connected by
the simplicity
of touch, of voice, of presence.

My sister is not a statistic

She was a woman who spanned the seven ages.
A mother
A grandmother

A great grandmother
A sister
A Friend

An aunt
A carer
A giver

My sister is not a statistic

And so, she joins the mounting thousands

They are not statistics on the Deathometer of COVID

They are the wives, mothers, children, fathers, sisters,
brothers,

The layers of all our loved ones

If she could, believe me when I say, she would hold every last one of your loved
ones, croon

to and comfort them and say – you were loved.

Whilst we who have been left behind mourn deep, keening the loss, the
injustice, the rage.

One day we will smile and laugh again, we will remember with joy that, once, we
shared a life, we knew joy and survived sadness.

You are my sister... and I love you.



Dorothy Duffy, April 2020, Ireland

From Psalm 16: Secure in the Presence of God

Shiviti Adonai l'negdi tamid;

ki mimini: bal-emot.

Lachein samach libi, vayagel k'vodi;

af-b'sari yishkon lavetach.

Ki lo-taazov nafshi lish-ol;

lo-titein chasid'cha lirot shachat.

Todi-eini orach chayim,

sova s'machot et panecha,

n'imot bimin'cha netzach.

שׁוֹיִתִּי, יי, לְבַגְדֵי תָמִיד
כִּי מִיָּמִינִי בַל-אֲמוֹט.
לְכֹן שְׂמַח לְבִי וַיִּגַּל כְּבוֹדִי
אֶרְבֶּשֶׁרִי יִשְׁכֵּן לְבֶטֶח.
כִּי לֹא-תַעֲזֹב נַפְשִׁי לְשֹׂאוֹל
לֹא-תִתֵּן חֲסִידְךָ לְרֵאוֹת שָׁחַת.
תּוֹדִיעֵנִי אֶרְחַח חַיִּים
שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת-פִּנְיֶךָ
בְּעֲמֹת בְּיָמֶיךָ בְּצַח.

Keep me, Eternal One, for in You I find refuge,
and in You my soul finds its peace.
Guardian of all my days,
You are my cup from which I drink,
and the portion of my life.



Rabbi:

**Our Second Candle We Light
to Recognize Those Deaths That for Too Long
Have Been Unrecognized Outside of Communities of Color.**

May we never become complacent with the number of deaths that occur from violence in this country.

Last year, we lit a candle for those whose lives had ended from gun violence. Sadly, this year we expand this candle to include racial violence, acknowledging that by virtue of bias or social conditions, to live as a person of color in our country is to statistically increase your chance of dying violently. This is a shame we carry.

Reader # 3: Linda and Russ Charvonia

Today we Say Their Names. George Floyd. Jacob Blake, Tamir Rice, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner. Today we give voice to those who have been victims of racial violence. And we vow to no longer be silent, no longer be uncaring, no longer let our silence be complicity, believing their story is not our story, their skin color is not our skin color. Ahmaud Arbery, Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown. Regardless of the circumstances of their encounter: *if it had been us, would we have ended up dead?* This candle calls to us: *Ner Adonai Nishmat Adam*, the soul of each person is the lamp of God. Each one of us is sacred- a reflection of the Divine Spirit that is unbounded by pigment, undefined by skintone. Diminished only by human bigotry. Surely God is crying tears at these deaths.

It is not for the individual alone to confess, but for us as a society to see what we have created. We join in this communal confessional.

A Vidui for Racism

We have **abstained** from uncomfortable growth.
We have **belittled** the pain of our fellow humans.
We have **complied** with social pressures.
We have **desensitized** ourselves to the suffering of others.
We have **engaged** in performative activism.
We have **forgotten** how to dream.

We have **g**rown accustomed to our power.
We have **h**eard the cries and chosen to stay silent.
We have **i**gnored our personal responsibility.
We have **j**oined the path of least resistance.
We have **k**illed innocent people through our silence.
We have **l**aughed to avoid confronting problematic behavior.
We have **m**ade excuses instead of listening.
We have **n**ot used the power of our voices.
We have **o**ppressed others for our own gain.
We have **p**erpetuated racist systems in our society.
We have **q**uestioned the severity of the situation.
We have **r**obbed children of their innocence.
We have **s**tood idly by in the face of wrongs.
We have **t**aught a false narrative.
We have **u**ndermined movements for change.
We have **v**alued property over life.
We have **w**alked away from a chance to help.
We have been **x**enophobic.
We have **y**elled to mask our fear.
We have **z**ealously guarded the status quo.

For all these sins, may we earn forgiveness, through our actions, through our learning, through our change of heart.

By Samantha Thal

Rabbi:



**Our 3rd Candle Calls Out from the Darkness
Those Who Have Died Suffering
From Self-Violence, Mental Illness, Suicide**

Reader #4: Kathy Wertheim

Let there be rest.
And let there be, at least, the perfect rest-
O Merciful God Most High.

Let there be light:
Heaven's radiance, gleaming light of the holy and pure
For my holy and pure one
Whose corner was lit only by broken shards of light-
Not nearly enough to see by.

Let there be, in my life, a shelter
Against the storms of guilt, anger, grief, and pain.
When dark clouds gather above me-
May I find a warm shelter of peace.

And let there be a circle of souls around me-
Patient, persistent, filled with Your compassion;
And let us be bound up in a loving bond that will not break.
Rest.
Light.
Shelter of peace.
Circle of souls.
And give me the strength to praise.

Nachamu, Nachamu

Nachamu, Nachamu ami
Yomar Eloheichem (4x)
Comfort us, comfort us
In our wilderness
Comfort us as we struggle to take care of one another
Comfort us, comfort us
In our wilderness
Comfort us as we struggle with this world.



Lyrics, setting of Isaiah 40:1-3

by Elana Arian

Rabbi:



**Our 4th Candle We Light
to Acknowledge Those Who Perished
in the Holocaust.**

We come to this day of memory and we pray for the souls of our own people, who have died at the hands of racism: victims of anti-Semitism and the xenophobia that is the scourge of humanity.

When will we learn, O God that none of us are despised by You?

When will we know, O God, that none of us are more beloved by You?

Help us to rid this world of hate, beginning with our own.

Reader #5: Sara Alviani

Snowing Ashes

It's snowing my people today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
Like the tears that escape from my eyes
As I tilt my head toward the skies
And question my God in His purpose
Of taking so many lives

It's snowing the mothers today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
897641 now, but she used to have a name
I knew mama would never be the same
Woman who comforted me when I was frightened
For there was no comfort once the men came

It's snowing the fathers today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
To the ground where they had stood so tall
Promising to protect us all
They were helpless to the horror
Banging fists against the wall

It's snowing the husbands and wives today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
The broken glass that lay at the bride's feet
Symbolized the despair she thought they'd never greet
Until this Holocaust began
Separated in the ghetto, in the skies they meet

It's snowing the children today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
The flame of our bright future was dimmed
As their tiny young bodies went in
Never to play again
With the happiness that once had been

It's snowing the babies today
Ashes, ashes, they all fall down
Their cries have now been replaced
By the screams of the mothers who faced
Life without their small joys
Any solace was now erased

It snowed my people yesterday
Ashes, ashes, they all fell down
Like the tears that escape from my eyes
As I tilt my head toward the skies
And question my God in His purpose
Of taking so many lives
Of taking so many lives

Amy Dorfman

B'yado Afkid Ruchi

*B'yado afkid ruchi
B'eit Ishan v'a-irah.
V'im ruchi g'vaiyati,
Adonai li v'lo ira.*

*My soul I give to you, my spirit in Your hand;
Hold me near, I shall not fear, safely in your hands;
hold me near, I shall not fear,
safely in Your hands.*

Rabbi:



**Our 5th Candle We Light
Acknowledges The Loss Of Friends
And Acquaintances**

Reader #6 : Cliff Wilcox

A Letter for Grieving Friends (inspired by psalm 23)

Those who walk through the Valley of Shadows wear no shoes. Their feet are cut and torn as they stumble through the darkness. With no time to pack a bag or say goodbye, they begin their journeys unprepared. Some are dressed in finery: jewels gleaming like stars in the dim light. Others are in pajamas, work clothes, prayer shawls or bathing suits. Some clutch briefcases, papers, blankets or teddy bears.

And everyone wears their grief.

With each cautious, painful step, they move further into the abyss. The chaos narrows. Stretching out their fingers they trace the grooves carved by previous pilgrims- handholds hewn into the cold canyon walls.

Sometimes they march in silence. Other times, singing hauntingly beautiful melodies, their voices echo to the very vaults of heaven.

The river that created this place does not flow from on high: it was formed and filled by the tears of those whose bruised souls traversed the trail.

No one walks alone here: Stumbling pilgrims are quickly caught and held aloft By those who travel beside them—They are caressed and carried through the brambles and branches that, unexposed and hidden from sight, add to the chaos and confusion of the journey.

In time (for some) a light appears in the distance—piercing through the veil of darkness. Hope- long buried, rises to the surface like a beacon.

And with it, the weary marchers ascend to find a world that has been changed forever by their absence. They return with pale faces and broken hearts. But now, as experienced travelers, they will always have a suitcase packed and ready.

Rabbi Joe Black

We Will Remember You

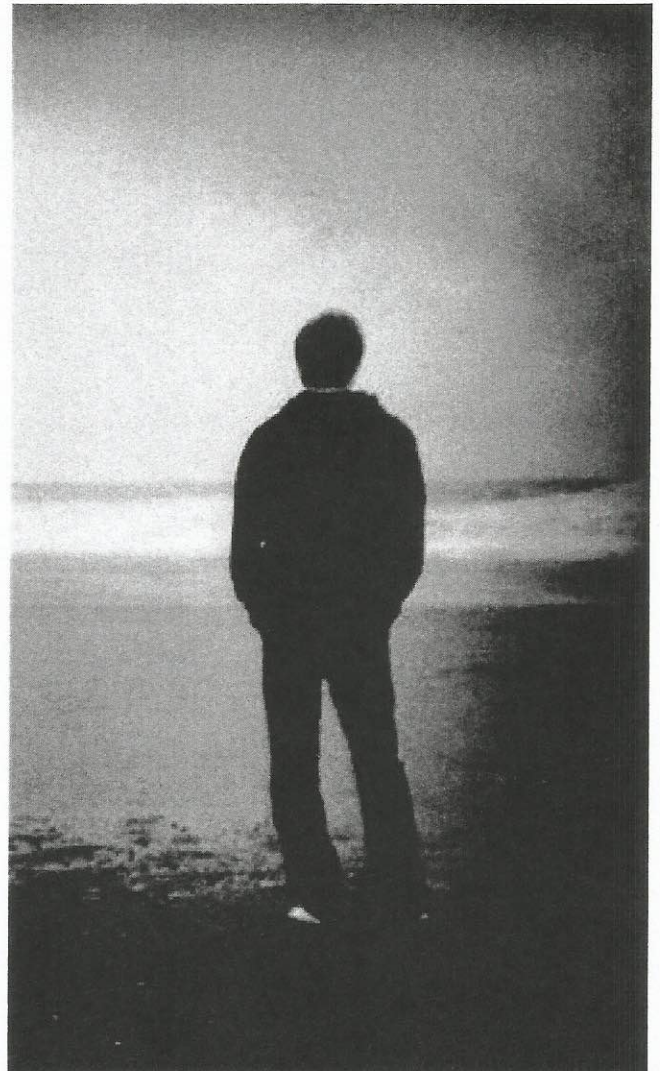
As the sun rises
Or when it sets
When we feel the wind blow
As cold as it gets

Feeling elated
Recalling the tears
Reliving the laughter
Throughout all those years

We will remember.
We will remember.

If we get lonely
If our heart breaks
As long as we're living
As long as that takes

We will remember.
We will remember.
We will remember you.



Words and Music: Alan Shapiro 2018

Rabbi:



**Our 6th Candle We Light
to Remember Those
of the Generations of Our Family**

Reader #7: Karen Kinrose

Without You

I've laughed and loved
Fought and cried
Watched my daughters become young women
Achieved career success
Made new friends
Read books we would have talked about
Cleaned my house over and over
Repainted walls and pulled out carpets
Celebrated birthdays, anniversaries and the new millennium
Withstood the shock of 9/11
Prayed for others and myself
Turned fifty, then sixty
Discovered a poet lives inside me
Toasted couples newly married
Consoled broken hearts
Visited old friends in faraway places
Revisited art museums you took me to see
Ate pastries in Copenhagen
Saw Costa Rican sunsets
Sat quietly in redwood forests
Hiked new trails to glorious vistas
Uncovered our Quaker ancestral roots
Returned to the streets of my childhood
All this and more
Without you.

Twenty years later
I still miss you.

Karen Kinrose/July 2016

Psalm 23- Adonai Ro'i/ The Eternal is My Shepherd

Mizmor l'David.

Adonai ro-i; lo echsar.

Binot deshe yarbitzeini;

al-mei m'nuchot y'nahaleini.

Nafshi y'shoveiv;

yancheini v'mag'lei-tzedek l'maan sh'mo.

Gam ki-eileich b'gei tzalmavet,

lo-ira ra, ki-atah imadi.

Shivt'cha umishantecha — heimah y'nachamuni.

Taaroch l'fanai shulchan neged tzor'rai.

Dishanta vashemen roshi;

kosi r'vayah.

Ach tov vachased yird'funi kol-y'mei chayai;

v'shavti b'veit-Adonai l'orech yamim.

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד.

יְיָ רֹעִי, לֹא אֶחְסָר.

בְּנֹאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצְבִּי,

עַל מֵי מְנַחוֹת יִנְהַלְבִּי.

נַפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב,

יִנְהַנֵּי בְּמַעְגְלֵי צְדָק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ.

גַּם כִּי אֶלֶף בְּגִיא צַלְמוֹת

לֹא אִירָא רַע כִּי אַתָּה עִמָּדִי.

שָׁבַטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתְּךָ הִמָּה יִנְחַמְבִּי.

תַּעֲרֹךְ לִפְנֵי שִׁלְחֹן בְּגַד צַרְרִי,

דִּשְׁנַת בְּשֵׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי,

כּוֹסֵי רוּיָה.

אֵךְ טוֹב וַחֲסֵד יִרְדְּפוּבִי כְּלַיְמֵי חַיִּי,

וְשָׁבַתִּי בְּבֵית יְיָ לְאַרְךָ יָמִים.



**Our 7th Candle We Light
to Honor Our Most Precious Relationships-
Parents, Children, Spouses**

Reader # 8: Kathy Fink

Kaddish

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

The Yizkor Prayer (recited silently)

May God remember the soul of.... Who is now eternally at home.

For the sake of *tikkun olam*, I freely give *tzedakah* in her/his memory.

For the sake of her/his precious soul, let my memories, my prayers, and my acts of goodness bind her/him to the bond of life.

May I bring honor to her/his memory by word and deed.

May my loved one be "at one" with the One who is life eternal,

And may the beauty of her/his life shine forevermore.

For a Man or Boy

Yizkor Elohim et nishmat.....
shehalach l'olamo.
Hin'ni nodev/nodevet tz'dakah
b'ad hazkarat nishmato.
Ana t'hi nafsho
tz'rurah bitzror hachayim
ut-hi m'nuchato kavod —
sova s'machot et panecha,
n'imot bimincha netzach.

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נִשְׁמַת
שֶׁהִלָּךְ לְעוֹלָמוֹ.
הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב וְנוֹדֵבֶת צְדָקָה
בְּעַד הַזְּכָרֶת נִשְׁמָתוֹ.
אֲנֵא תְּהִי נַפְשׁוֹ
צְרוּרָה בְּצִרּוֹר הַחַיִּים
וְתְּהִי מְנוּחָתוֹ כְּבוֹד,
שׁוֹבֵעַ שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת פְּנֵיךְ,
נְעִימוֹת בִּימֵיךְ נֶצַח.

For a Woman or Girl

Yizkor Elohim et nishmat.....
shehal'chah l'olamah.
Hin'ni nodev/nodevet tz'dakah
b'ad hazkarat nishmatah.
Ana t'hi nafshah
tz'rurah bitzror hachayim
ut-hi m'nuchatah kavod —
sova s'machot et panecha,
n'imot bimincha netzach.

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נִשְׁמַת
שֶׁהִלְכָה לְעוֹלָמָהּ.
הִנְנִי נוֹדֵב וְנוֹדֵבֶת צְדָקָה
בְּעַד הַזְּכָרֶת נִשְׁמָתָהּ.
אֲנֵא תְּהִי נַפְשָׁהּ
צְרוּרָה בְּצִרּוֹר הַחַיִּים
וְתְּהִי מְנוּחָתָה כְּבוֹד,
שׁוֹבֵעַ שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת פְּנֵיךְ,
נְעִימוֹת בִּימֵיךְ נֶצַח.

Rabbi: Blessed are the memories, holy and cherished the love they reveal.

We pray- May our sorrows soften and diminish in strength.

May the pains of past bereavements grow gentler with time.

Let memory bring us nearer to the loved ones in our midst.

El Moleh Rachamim

Memorial Prayer

*El malei rachamim,
shochein bam'romim,
hamtzei m'nuchah n'chonah
tachat kanfei hash'chinah —
im k'doshim ut-horim
k'zohar harakia mazhirim —
l'nishmot yakireinu
shehal'chu l'olamam.
Baal harachamim yastireim
b'seiter k'nafav l'olamim;
v'yitzror bitzror hachayim
et nishmatam.
Adonai — hu nachalatam.
V'yanuchu b'shalom al mishkavam.
V'nomar: Amen.*

אל מלא רחמים,
שוכן במרומים.
המצא מנוחה נכונה
תחת כנפי השכינה
עם קדושים וטהורים
כזהר הרקיע מזהירים
לנשמות יקירינו
שהלכו לעולמם.
בעל הרחמים יסתירם
בסתר כנפיו לעולמים,
ויצרור בצרור החיים
את נשמתם.
יי הוא נחלתם.
וינוחו בשלום על משכבם.
ונאמר: אמן.

Merciful God,
God Most High:
Let there be perfect rest
for the souls of our loved ones who have gone into eternity.
May they find shelter in Your presence among the holy and pure
whose light shines like the radiance of heaven.
Compassionate God, hold them close to You forever.
May their souls be bound up in the bond of life eternal.
May they find a home in You.
And may they rest in peace.
Together we say: *Amen*.

Kaddish

MOURNER'S KADDISH

YITGADAL v'yitkadash shmei raba.

B'alma div'ra chirutei,

v'yamlich malchutei,

b'chayeichon uv'yomeichon

uv'chayei d'chol beit Yisrael,

baagala uvizman kariv. V'im'ru: Amen.

Y'hei sh'mei raba m'varach

l'alam ul'almei almaya.

Yitbarach v'yishtabach v'yitpaar

v'yitromam v'yitnasei,

v'yit-hadar v'yitaleh v'yit'halal

sh'mei d'Kud'sha B'rich Hu,

l'eila min kol birchata v'shirata,

tushb'chata v'nechemata,

daamiran b'alma. V'imru: Amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya,

v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael.

V'imru: Amen.

Oseh shalom bimromav,

Hu yaaseh shalom aleinu,

v'al kol Yisrael. V'imru: Amen.

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.

בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתְהָ,

וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתְהָ,

בְּתַיִיכוֹן וּבְיַמֵּיכוֹן

וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,

בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב. וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ

לְעֵלְמֵי וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֲלַמְיָא.

וְתַבְרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאֵר

וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא,

וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל

שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא,

לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא,

תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנִחַמְתָּא,

דְאָמִירוֹן בְּעֵלְמָא. וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא,

וְחַיִּים עֲלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו,

הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵינוּ,

וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Rabbi:

“To be alive is to be made of memory. If a person is not made of memory, then they’re made of nothing at all.” wrote Phillip Roth, in his novel, Patrimony.

Yizkor has given us the opportunity for reflection, to dwell in the place of memory. We rise from this hour knowing that, in the words of Rabbi Aaron Panken, **“Yizkor is, in the end, not a prayer for the dead, but a promise by the living.”** May we grow deeper, wiser, more compassionate, more alive, from exploring the contours of grief together, as one sacred community. **Grief is a perfect teacher,** writes the poet, **if it sends us back to serve the living.**

Closing Song: Those Who Sow (*Psalm 126*)

Those who sow, who sow in tears, will reap in joy, will reap in joy.