YIZKOR
For Yom Kippur

from
MAHZOR LEV SHALEM
Edward Feld, editor

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
WE RECALL

Some of us recall parents who watched over us, nursed us, guided us, and sacrificed for us.

Some of us lovingly call to mind a wife, husband, or partner with whom we were truly united—in our hopes and our pains, in our failures and our achievements, in our joys and our sorrows.

Some of us remember brothers and sisters, who grew up together with us, sharing in the play of childhood, in the youthful adventure of discovering life’s possibilities, bound to us by a heritage of family tradition and by years of togetherness and love.

Some of us call to mind children, entrusted to us too briefly, to whom we gave our loving care and from whom we received a trust that enriched our lives.

So many of us recall beloved relatives and friends whose affection and devotion enhanced our lives, and whose visible presence will never return to cheer, encourage, or support us.

Though they are gone, we are grateful for the blessings they brought to our lives. We are sustained and comforted by the thought that their presence in our lives remains an enduring blessing that we can bequeath to others.

We can show our devotion to them by our devotion to those ideas that they cherished.

O God of love, make us worthy of the love we have received by teaching us to love You with all our heart and with all our soul and with all our might, and to spread the light of Your divine love on all whose lives touch ours.

Give us strength to live faithfully, for we are cheered by our confidence that You will not permit our lives to be wasted, but will bring all our worthy strivings to live on, even as we may not see their fulfillment.

—mordecai m. kaplan, eugene kohn, and ira eisenstein
(adapted from mahzor hadash)

INTRODUCTION. Yizkor is a time set aside to formally include in our thoughts and prayers family and friends who have passed away. Though Yizkor is recited on each of the festivals, on the High Holy Days we may feel a special connection to those who have played a significant role in our life’s journey. The themes and somber ambience of the Yom Kippur service make this day especially appropriate for contemplating life and death. Thus, in reciting Yizkor, the veil between the worlds of the living and the dead becomes more transparent, less opaque. May the memory of those we recall be a blessing in our lives.

WHAT ARE HUMAN BEINGS

The verses in this passage come from Psalms 14:3–4, 90:6, and 90:12.

God 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.

The deaths of those we now remember leave holes in our lives. But we are grateful for the gift of their lives and we are strengthened by the blessings that they left us and the precious memories that comfort and sustain us as we recall them this day.
I failed to bring him back.

Standing before me, smiling broadly, his face flushed with pleasure.

I remembered how clean and short he kept his nails

Though I stared earnestly at the cuticle of my right forefinger

I happened to look at the cuticle of my right forefinger

The whole man

Yom Kippur · Morning Service · Yizkor

May God remember the soul of

In memory of male relatives or friends:

May God remember the soul of

In memory of female relatives or friends:

In memory of male relatives or friends:

In memory of female relatives or friends:

We each continue in private meditation, selecting from among the following and adding appropriate names as indicated. Personal prayers may be added.

We rise.

In memory of male relatives or friends:

In memory of female relatives or friends:

TZ’Dakah/Charity

The Yizkor service was called sefer 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 (when Yizkor is recited): “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.

We each continue in private meditation, selecting from among the following and adding appropriate names as indicated. Personal prayers may be added.

We rise.

In memory of male relatives or friends:

In memory of female relatives or friends:
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:
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 these moments of meditation strengthen the ties that link us to their memory. May they rest in peace forever in God's presence. Amen.

IN MEMORY OF THE SIX MILLION:
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 the men, women, and children of the House of Israel who were slaughtered, strangled, and burned in the Shoah. 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.
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.

PSALM 23
A PSALM OF DAVID.

Adonai is my shepherd, I shall not want.
God gives me repose in green meadows, and guides me over calm waters.
God will revive my spirit and direct me on the right path— for that is God’s way.
Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no harm, for You are at my side.
Your staff and Your rod comfort me.
You prepare a banquet for me in the presence of my foes:
You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and kindness shall be my portion all the days of my life,
And I shall dwell in the house of Adonai in the fullness of time.

My Peace
My peace is tied by a thread to yours.
And the beloved holidays and glorious seasons of the year— with the wealth of fragrances, flowers, fruit, leaves, and winds, the fog and the rain, the sudden snow and the dew—are suspended on a thread of longing.
I and you and the Sabbath.
I and you and our lives in the last incarnation.
I and you and the lie.
And the fear.
And the breaches.
I and you and the Creator of the heavens that have no shore.
I and you and the riddle.
I and you and death.

—ZELDA
(trans. Marcia Falk)
Mourners:

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 the name of the Holy One be acknowledged forever and ever!

May God’s great name 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.

Mourners:

Yitgaddal v’yitkaddash sh’mei rabba, b’alma di v’ra’, ki-r’uteih, v’yamlikh malkhuteih b’hayeikhon u-v’yomeikhon u-v-hayei d’khol beit yisra-el, ba-agala u-viz’man kariv, v’imru amen.

Congregation and mourners:

Y’hei sh’mei rabba m’varakh l’alam u-l’amayya.

Mourners:

Y’hei sh’lomei 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 teivei], v’imru amen.