

## A Prayer for Toulouse

By Mark Greenspan

Today we begin preparation for Passover.  
On *Shabbat Ha-Hodesh*,  
We remember how our ancestors,  
Enslaved and oppressed in Egypt,  
Who set aside a lamb and prepared for the night when  
God would pass through the land of Egypt,  
Taking the first born of the Egyptians,  
But sparing the firstborn of Israel.

We do not rejoice in the suffering of others  
Nor do we gloat when violence  
Touches those who hate us.  
At the sea, we heard the Holy One rebuke the angels:  
“My children drowned and you rejoice?”

This day we mourn for Rabbi Jonathan Sandler,  
A teacher and lover of our tradition,  
Whose life was cut short by a despicable act of terror.  
We remember his children and students  
Who will never know the full joy of living a life a life of Torah;  
nor grow to adulthood and experience the fullness of life.

And we stand together,  
Shaken by this act of callousness and cowardice,  
We are aware that the borders of Israel  
Do not end at the sea or the desert;  
They extend to our own back yards and our homes.  
We must be vigilant in combating terror,  
Neither cowering in fear nor drowning in hatred.

Remind us that  
When one of our people is attacked,  
We are all attacked,  
And when one community is defamed  
We are all defamed.

Teach others that hatred knows no boundaries;  
That silence is deadly; and  
But that no community should be judged  
By the acts of an individual.

May the deaths of Rabbi Sandler and his students  
Be a wakeup call:  
What happened in Toulouse can happen anywhere  
When we are complacent.  
The only answer to hatred is justice and peace.

Amen