

אחד עשרי הרוגי שואה

Eleven Victims of H: A New Martyrology



Compiled by

Rabbi Jeffrey Myers

Tree of Life

Pittsburgh, PA

יום כפור תש"ף

Yom Kippur 5780

The Martyrology is a section of the Yom Kippur liturgy that relates the death of ten Rabbis at the hand of the Roman Emperor Hadrian during the first quarter of the second Century. Also known by the title *Asarah Harugei Malchut*, literally “Ten Slaughtered by the Government”, it paints in very descriptive detail the torture and murder of ten Rabbis. Talmudic in origin, it draws from a number of sources, some unknown, to offer a painful story that alas is not unfamiliar to the Jewish people. Jews for countless generations have reflected upon this difficult section, shocked by the brutality of fellow human beings. Over time, additional examples of martyrdom have been introduced to some *machzorim*, especially prose and poetry of the Holocaust.

And then came October 27, 2018.

Eleven new martyrs were added to a list that is already unbearably long. I felt the need to offer a reworked Martyrology that remembered our past yet honored our newest martyrs. It is in that spirit that I humbly offer *Echad Esrei Harugei Sin’ah*, “Eleven Slaughtered by H”.

Yom Kippur 5780
Rabbi Jeffrey Myers
Tree of Life
Pittsburgh, PA

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אַלֶּה אֶזְכָּרָה וְנִפְשִׁי עָלַי אֲשַׁפֶּכֶה
כִּי בִלְעֻנּוֹ יָדַיִם כָּעֵגֶה בְּלִי הַפּוֹכָה.

These I remember and pour out my soul
How the arrogant have devoured us, like an unfinished cake.

Joyce Fienberg

Richard Gottfried

Rose Mallinger

Jerry Rabinowitz

Cecil Rosenthal

David Rosenthal

Bernice Simon

Sylvan Simon

Dan Stein

Mel Wax

Irv Younger

Psalm 137

By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion.

Psalm 116

Grievous in Adonai's sight is the death of the faithful.

Dead Sea Scrolls. Opening section of the 16th hymn of Thanksgiving

I will praise You, O Lord, for You have put me by a source of streams on the dry ground, by bubbling springs on the parched land, by the waters that irrigate Your luxuriant garden – a grove of pine together with fir and box – which You planted for Your glory. These are the Trees of Life, set beside a secret spring, concealed among all the well-watered trees. One day the Trees of Life will put forth a shoot which will become the everlasting plant, for they take root before they grow and extend their roots towards the stream. And the plant will open its stem to the living waters; it will become an everlasting source of blessing.

Lamentations

Alas! Lonely sits the city once great with people! She that was great among nations is become like a widow; the princess among states is become a thrall. Bitterly she weeps in the night, her cheek wet with tears. There is none to comfort her of all her friends.

The Martyrdom of Rabbi Akiva

The Romans decreed that the people Israel no longer be allowed to study Torah. Rabbi Akiva publicly convened assemblies and continued to teach Torah. He was captured and imprisoned. The hour of execution was the time for the recitation of the morning Sh'ma, so as they scraped his skin with iron combs, he recited the Sh'ma, accepting the yoke of the sovereignty of heaven. His pupils cried out, "Even now?!" He said to them, "All my life, I was troubled that I could not fulfill the verse to love God 'with all your soul' – that is, even should God take your life. I asked myself, 'When will the time come that I can fulfill the verse?' Now that I have that possibility, shouldn't I fulfill it?!" He prolonged the word "*Echad*" so that his soul left him as he uttered the word "*Echad*".

יִזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים נַשְׁמוֹת אֶחָד-עֶשְׂרֵה בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁמָּסְרוּ אֶת-נַפְשָׁם עַל
קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם. הֵנִי נֹדֵב/נֹדֶבֶת צָדָקָה בְּעַד הַזְכָּרַת נַשְׁמוֹתֵיהֶם. אֲנִי
יִשְׁמַע בְּחַיֵּינוּ הַד גְּבוּרָתָם וּמַסִּירוֹתָם וַיִּרְאֶה בְּמַעֲשֵׂינוּ טָהָר לָבָם
וַתְּהַיָּיֵנָה נַפְשׁוֹתֵיהֶם צְרוּרוֹת בְּצָרוֹר הַחַיִּים וַתְּהִי מִנוּחָתָם כְּבוֹד, שֶׁבַע
שְׁמֹחוֹת אֶת-פָּנֶיךָ, נְעִימוֹת בִּימִינְךָ נֶצַח. אָמֵן.

May God remember the souls of our eleven precious martyrs of our people whose lives were taken in the sanctification of Your name. In their memory do I/we pledge *zedakah*. May their bravery, their dedication, and their purity be reflected in our lives. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life eternal. May they rest forever in dignity and peace. And let us say: Amen.

Wherever I go, I hear footsteps:

My brothers on the road, in swamps, in forests,
Swept along in darkness, trembling from cold,
Fugitives from flames, plagues and terrors.

Wherever I stand, I hear rattling:

My brothers in chains, in chambers of the stricken.
They pierce the walls and burst the silence.
Through the generations their echoes cry out
In torture camps, in pits of the dead.

Wherever I lie, I hear voices:

My brothers herded to slaughter
Out of burning embers, out of ruins,
Out of cities and villages, altars for burnt offerings.
The groaning in their destruction haunts my nights.

My eyes will never stop seeing them

Any my heart will never stop crying "outrage";

Every one will be called to account for their death.

The heavens will descend to mourn for them,
The world and all that is therein will be a monument
on their grave.

Dear God, so much innocent bloodshed!

We are supposed to be created in Your image,

But O How we have distorted it.

When we recall the beastly acts of people,
We are ashamed to be human.
When we read of the nobility of their victims,
We are proud to be Jews.

Teach us, O God, to honor our martyrs,

By being vigilant in defense of our people everywhere,

And by fighting cruelty, persecution and H.

But must cruelty always be?

Must viciousness ever be the signature of humanity?

No! No! We refuse to accept that!

We refuse to give H the last word,

Because we have known the power of love.

We refuse to believe that cruelty will prevail,

Because we have felt the strength of kindness.

We refuse to award the ultimate victory to evil,
Because we believe in You.

So help us, O God, to draw strength from our faith,
And help us, our Father, to live by our faith.

Where there is H, may we bring love.

Where there is pain, may we bring healing.

Where there is darkness, may we bring light.

Where there is despair, may we bring hope.

Where there is discord, may we bring harmony.

Where there is strife, may we bring peace.

Make this a better world and begin with us.

We mourn them and vow not to forget them.

We are heirs to their horror, their heroism, their hopes.

We see no reason, we sense no purpose, we claim no justice in this vast martyrdom.

Yet, weeping, we affirm the sanctity of life,

God's elusive wisdom and compassion,

The hidden, waiting goodness within Man,

The eternal destiny of the House of Israel.

Who knows eleven? I know eleven! Eleven are the stars. (Passover Hagadah)

There are stars whose light reaches the earth
only after they themselves
have disintegrated and are no more.

And there are men and women
whose shining memory lights the world
after they themselves
are no longer amongst us.

These lights
which shine in the darkest night
are the very ones
which illumine for us the path.

In the rising of the sun, and in its going down, we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends, 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 joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

So long as they live, we, too, shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

The Jewish Cemetery at Newport

by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

How strange it seems! These Hebrews in their graves,
Close by the street of this fair seaport town,
Silent beside the never-silent waves,
At rest in all this moving up and down!

The trees are white with dust, that o'er their sleep
Wave their broad curtains in the south-wind's breath,
While underneath these leafy tents they keep
The long, mysterious Exodus of Death.

And these sepulchral stones, so old and brown,
That pave with level flags their burial-place,
Seem like the tablets of the Law, thrown down
And broken by Moses at the mountain's base.
The very names recorded here are strange,
Of foreign accent, and of different climes;
Alvares and Rivera interchange
With Abraham and Jacob of old times.

"Blessed be God! for he created Death!"
The mourners said, "and Death is rest and peace;"
Then added, in the certainty of faith,
"And giveth Life that nevermore shall cease."

Closed are the portals of their Synagogue,
No Psalms of David now the silence break,
No Rabbi reads the ancient Decalogue
In the grand dialect the Prophets spake.

Gone are the living, but the dead remain,
And not neglected; for a hand unseen,
Scattering its bounty, like a summer rain,
Still keeps their graves and their remembrance green.

How came they here? What burst of Christian H,
What persecution, merciless and blind,
Drove o'er the sea - that desert desolate -
These Ishmaels and Hagars of mankind?

They lived in narrow steets and lanes obscure,
Ghetto and Judenstrauss, in mirk and mire;

Taught in the school of patience to endure
The life of anguish and death of fire.

All their lives long, with the unleavened bread
And bitter herbs of exile and its fears,
The wasting famine of the heart they fed,
And slaked its thirst with marah of their tears.

Anathema maranatha! was the cry
That rang from town to town, from street to street;
At every gate the accursed Mordecai
Was mocked and jeered, and spurned by Christian feet.

Pride and humiliation hand in hand
Walked with them through the world where'er they went;
Trampled and beaten were they as the sand,
And yet unshaken as the continent.
For in the background figures vague and vast
Of patriarchs and of prophets rose sublime,
And all the great traditions of the Past
They saw reflected in the coming time.

And thus forever with reverted look
The mystic volume of the world they read,
Spelling it backward, like a Hebrew book,
'Til life became a Legend of the Dead.

But ah! what once has been shall be no more!
The groaning earth in travail and in pain
Brings forth its races, but does not restore,
And the dead nations never rise again.

A Poet Sits Down to Write After a Massacre

Tree of Life Synagogue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 27, 2018

The dead keep piling up and all I have are poems
to wrap them in. Pockmarks across synagogue walls
are a new font in a familiar language I refuse to utter.
Men have begun again to speak in tongues syntaxed
by phonemes of caliber and clip capacity: diction I
will not assemble into sentences; sounds I cannot make
into words. What color, the stripes being woven like old
narratives into new camp pajamas? How many stars
asterisk prayers into the bluest night? There is no

metaphor for what I cannot abide; no pentameter
for the sound of earth falling from the hands of love
into a freshly-filled grave. My iambs are a pair
of backwards-turned boots in the stirrups of a riderless
horse. We measure the inarticulate grammar of fear
in the steady metronome of newsfeed updates,
punctuate the lulls between carnage with promises
enjambéd in the wind. Cover my eyes with verses
if you must. Bribe the ferryman with curses and dust.
A poet's contract is blood-inked, bone-stamped,
ratified eternal at the frontier where hope kisses rust.

A Minyan Plus One

was taken from us on the Shabbat,
the most joyous of the holidays,
the only holy day even God himself

celebrates, the emulation of Eden,
the day of completion. Before
they could perform the service, before
they could take their seats and begin
the prayers, before the ark opened
and the Torah revealed,

before they could rise and sway
and chant their portion, the book
opened like wings in their steady hands,

though they know the blessings by heart.
I didn't know them, but I knew them
in the way we know those raised.

no matter where we originated,
in the same beliefs our ancestors
inherited all the way back into

those mysterious origins,
those stories of creation and exile,
of miracles and complicated kings,

of commandments and wisdoms -
"welcome the stranger" -
spread across the millennium.

We suffer the same persecutions,
celebrate the same triumphs, chant,
in the same order, the blessings,

hour after hour, holiday after holiday,
generation after generation,
Torah portion after Torah portion.

Before that week's Torah portion,
A minyan plus one was taken.
When they would have once again

heard the story of when Abraham,
our first Patriarch of Chutzpah,
approached and argued with the Lord:

"Will you sweep away the righteous
with the wicked?" And He was answered:
"For the sake of ten, I will not destroy it."
And so, as on other days, on that day -
He did. He allowed the wicked
to sweep away the righteous.

*And when the Lord had finished
speaking with Abraham, He left.
And took a minyan plus one.*

And Abraham returned home.

Prayer for the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh

Tree of Life,
Revive our souls,
Enrich our days,
Entreating Your blessings.
Oh, God of Peace,
Fill our hearts with comfort, a
Letting Your Torah shine,
In the fullness of our love.
Faith in You, our God,
Eternal Source of blessings.

עץ חיים
צויתנו לבחור בחיים
חדש את ימינו
יחד לבנו והאר עינינו בתורתך
שלא פניו אלינו בחן ובשלום
מקור החיים והברכות.

Praying for healing
In the depths of despair,
Thanking God for the survivors,
Thanking God for the first responders,
Sorrow crushing our hearts,
Bereaved beyond belief,
United in our love,
Returning to You in faith,
God of Israel,
Healer of generations.

פְּתַחְנוּ שְׁפָתוֹתֵינוּ בְּתַפִּלָּה
י-ה, מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאנוּ אֵלֶיךָ
טוֹב לַהוֹדוֹת עִם הַנִּצְוִלִים וְעִבּוֹר הַמִּצִּילִים
סוּמָךְ ה' לְכָל הַנִּפְלִים וְזוֹקֵף לְכָל הַכְּפוּפִים
בְּגִיוֹן וּבִכְאָב הִתְאַחַדְנוּ
וְשִׁבְנוּ עִדִּיד בְּאַמוּנָה מִתּוֹךְ אֲהֻבָּתֵנוּ אֶחָד לַשָּׁנִיָּה
רָפְאוּנוּ וְנַרְפֵּא
גָּמַל עָלֵינוּ כָּל טוֹב סֵלָה.

Tree of Life,
Redeemer of Israel,
Enliven this moment with healing,
Enliven this moment with hope.
Oh, Rock of Israel,
Forget not the Jews of Pittsburgh.
Let Your love flow
In the days ahead
For justice and peace
Everlasting.

עֵץ חַיִּים
צוּר יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגוֹאֲלוֹ
חוּסָה נָא וְחַיֵּנוּ
לִשְׁכֵּנוּ בְּתוֹכֵנוּ צִדְקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט
י-ה, שְׁמֹר צִאתֵנוּ וּבֹאֵנוּ בְּפִיטְסְבוּרְגַּ וּבִרְחֻבֵי תִיבֵל
מִעֲתָה וְעַד עוֹלָם.

The “Tree” of Squirrel Hill(selections only)
Inspiration and Music: Billy Joel

The Tree had lost many branches
But its roots were so intricately bound
That the world decided to water the tree
And secure its place in the ground.

This Tree would not topple, it wouldn't be lost
Though the pain was palpably felt
And the dead were honored by thousands of souls
Who gathered to where they had dwelt.

“Return us oh God to days of yore”
To your Tree of Life we can cling
And the Torah shall be held high as once it was
And in this sacred place we shall again sing.

The world has learned that together we must
Fight hate with abounding love
And stronger will we become because

Of the lives of these precious white doves.

Brothers and sisters of all races and faiths
Must find in their hearts the truth
That humanity needs to begin to repair
This world for our future and youth.

Sing a song for the hope of the day
When hatred shall no longer be
'Cause we're all in the need of love's melody
And it's up to both you and me.

October 27, 2018

sitting in the lobby of my synagogue
there is an ancient Torah scroll, rescued
from the flames of the Shoah
displayed proudly for everyone
to see, it says:

we are here

we have always been here

and we always will be here

so try and take it.

50% of us may be old and geriatric
but we're still clinging to life like an aphid clings
to a plant crawling
with ladybugs.

so try and take it.

we were forced out, not just
one time, but

many

and by God we acted, we pretended, we lit our
candles in the dark of night and said the
blessings in our head, lied and scraped and
survived,

and still we sing tales of persecution and tell our children:

*you are not safe, you will never be safe, and when
they come for you,*

you will be prepared.

so try and take it.

when someone draws a swastika on the
school parking lot, and when I hear the words
filthy Jew,

when friends let Holocaust

jokes
roll off their tongues
and when my grandmother misses death by a
fraction
because she woke up late on a Saturday
and arrived to synagogue only to see police
cars outside,
I know that we will have to do one of
two things:
fight or
flee. and fleeing
won't cut it this time,
because dying is never an option, and we've run out of places
to go
where nobody will kill us.
I hear *when they go low, we go high*,
I think
when they go low, we survive.
So try
and take it,
we're ready, god damn it, and we haven't died out
yet, even after
the slavery
the inquisitions
the exiles
the diaspora
the pogroms
(even the 6 million, even *that*, even the genocide and the pain and the loss of
everything, everything, everything)
we're here,
and they are coming for us,
and we're prepared.
so try and take it.

From a poem written by a child in Terezin about a silver maple planted in the Concentration Camp:

Here were three things the Nazis could not take from us:
They could not take the blue sky above us, for our gazing.
They could not take the flood of sunlight pouring into our courtyard, nourishing our tree and us.
But most of all , they could not take Our Invisible God who remained deep in our hearts.

אל מלא רחמים שוכן במרומים. המצא מנוחה נכונה תחת כנפי
השכינה. במעלות קדושים וטהורים כזהר הרקיע מזהירים
את נשמות קדושי פיטסבורג -
אידיית בלצ'א בת אבא מנחם
יוסף בן חיים
רייזל בת אברהם
יהודה בן יחזקאל
חיים בן אליעזר
דוד בן אליעזר
בילא רחל בת משה
זלמן שכנא בן מנחם מענדל
דניאל אברהם בן ברוך
יצחק חיים בן מנחם
משה גדול בן יוסף

שנהרגו על קדוש השם, בעבור שאנו מתפללים לעלוי נשמותיהם.
וזכר-לנו עקדתם ותעמד-לנו ולכל ישראל זכותם.
אך אל-תבסי דמם ואל-יהי מקום לזעקתם.
אנא בעל הרחמים הסתירם בסתר כנפיד לעולמים,
וצרור בצרור החיים את נשמותיהם.
י הוא נחלתם, בגן עדן תהא מנוחתם,
ויצמדו לגורלם לקץ הימין. ונאמר אמן:

God full of mercy, who dwells on high, establish proper rest upon the wings of the Divine Presence, on the levels of the holy and pure ones who shine like the splendor of the firmament, for the souls of the *Kedoshim* of Pittsburgh,

Joyce Fienberg

Richard Gottfried

Rose Mallinger

Jerry Rabinowitz

Cecil Rosenthal

David Rosenthal

Bernice Simon

Sylvan Simon

Dan Stein

Mel Wax

Irv Younger

murdered *al Kiddush Hashem*, because we pray for the elevation of their souls. And remember for us their sacrifice and let their merit stand for us and for all of Israel. Let the earth not cover their blood and let there not be a place sufficient for their cries. Master of mercy, cover them in the cover of Your wings forever and bind their souls with the binding of life. God is their inheritance. May their rest be in *Gan Eden* and let them rest in peace upon their places of repose, and let them stand for their fate in the end of days. And let us say: *Amen*.

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֶלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתִיהּ, וַיִּמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתִיהּ
בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. בְּעֶגְלָא וּבְזֶמַן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ
אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:
יְתַבְּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלָּה וְיִתְהַלָּל
שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעֵלְמָא וּלְעֵלְמָא מְכָל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא תִּשְׁבַּחְתָּא
וְנִחַמְתָּא, דְּאָמְרוּ בְּעֶלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ
אָמֵן:

Permissions

1. “Lamentations”, The Five Megilloth and Jonah, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1969.
2. “The Martyrdom of Rabbi Akiva” and translation of *Yizkor* text, *Mahzor Lev Shalem*, The Rabbinical Assembly.
3. “Wherever I Go” and “We Mourn Them”, The New Mahzor, The Prayer Book Press, 1977.
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6. “A Minyan Plus One”, Philip Terman.
7. “Prayer for the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh”, Alden Solovy. Hebrew Interpretation of Alden Solovy’s “Tree of Life, Pittsburgh” acrostic by Rav. Aytan Kaden and Elyssa Moss-Rabinowitz
8. “The ‘Tree’ of Squirrel Hill”, Cantor Steven Stoehr.
9. “October 27, 2018”, Shira Haus.
10. “*El Malei*”, Rabbi Daniel Yolkut.