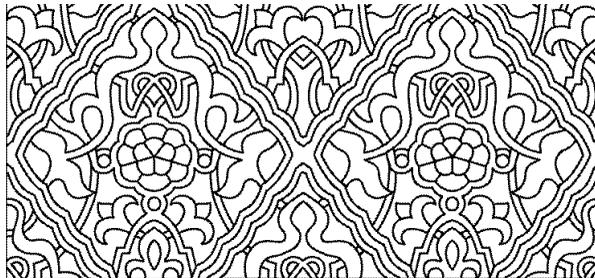


מחזור פרחי קדש

Martyrology Service
Yom Kippur Afternoon



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Front cover graphic: detail from Herman Chapel Ark doors

Edited by: Rabbi Yael Splansky

אלה אזכרה

Martyrology Service

Innocent children, our sacred progeny, do not lie:

"This is my God whom I would glorify," they loudly sang.

These were to be our inheritors, of whom we were so proud.

But now they have been wrapped in the bond of eternal life.

Has such ever been heard? A sight like this ever seen?

How can one believe such terrifying deeds?

Parents leading their children to slaughter as if to the marriage canopy?

How can the One on High hold back after this?

(excerpt from "In Witness of God" by David ben Meshullam, 12th century, Germany)

✎ Martyrology Service

אלה אזכרה

“Who shall live and who shall die?” is a terrifying refrain.

The Martyrology Service introduces another refrain. That is, what is a life of meaning? What would we be willing to die for? How do we claim our God-given opportunities to move history along a path towards justice and righteousness? How do they claim us? And how do our collective sins of omission allow our world to slip into darkness?

Against the backdrop of Jewish martyrdom, the Eileh Ezk'rah of the Middle Ages was not an annual crisis of faith, but a faithful challenge offered to God like another sacrifice. Together with the ashes of our People, we place our unanswered questions on the altar of history. Why do the innocent suffer? Where are You, Protector of Israel? And what has become of our covenant?

It is written in our Torah:

Aaron shall take two goats and present them before the Eternal God at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; and he shall cast lots upon the two goats, one marked for the Eternal God and the other marked as the scapegoat.

Aaron shall bring forward the goat cast by lot for the Eternal God, and sacrifice him as a sin offering; but the goat cast by lot to be a scapegoat shall be left standing alive before God, to make atonement by sending it off into the wilderness as a scapegoat.

וְלָקַח אֶת־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים וְהָעִמִּיד
אֹתָם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה פְּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד.
וַנִּתֵּן אֹהֶרֶן עַל־שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים
גִּרְלוֹת גּוֹרֵל אֶחָד לַיהוָה וְגּוֹרֵל
אֶחָד לַעֲזָאוֹל.

Leviticus 16:7-10

וְהִקְרִיב אֹהֶרֶן אֶת־הַשְּׂעִיר אֲשֶׁר
עָלָה עָלָיו הַגּוֹרֵל לַיהוָה וַעֲשָׂהוּ
חֲטָאתוֹ. וְהַשְּׂעִיר אֲשֶׁר עָלָה עָלָיו
הַגּוֹרֵל לַעֲזָאוֹל יַעֲמַד־חַי לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו לְשַׁלַּח אֹתוֹ
לַעֲזָאוֹל הַמִּדְבָּרָה.

Reader

The ancient ritual of the scapegoat.

In a twist of history, what was once a symbolic drama meant to impress upon our Biblical ancestors the need to acknowledge their own sins, repent, and cast them away, was turned into a terrifying pattern of denial of sin, displacement of anger, and rejection of responsibility.

Age after age, the Jew got caught in the wheels of the *Chad Gad Ya* machine. One little goat, forced to carry the burdens of broken societies. *Chad Gad Ya* cast to be both sacrifice and scapegoat. One little goat, the remnant of our people, still struggling to find its way through the wildernesses of this world.

The Baal Shem Tov taught: “Forgetfulness leads to further exile, while remembrance is the secret of our redemption.”

So let us remember.

Cantor and Congregation

These I recall and pour my heart out.

How the arrogant have devoured us!

These things do I remember. Through all the years, ignorance, like a monster, has devoured our martyrs as in one long day of blood. Rulers have risen through the endless years, oppressive and savage in their witless power, filled with a futile thought: to make an end of that which God cherishes.

אֱלֹהִים אֶזְכָּר
וְנִפְשֵׁי עַלְי אֲשַׁפֵּךְ.
כִּי בָלְעוּנוּ זֵדִים כְּעֵגֶה
בְּלִי הַפּוֹכָה.

Excerpt from
Midrash Eileh Ezkera

Reader

I have taken an oath: to remember it all.
To remember - to forget nothing at all.
Forgetting nothing of this
Till the tenth generation,
Till the grief disappears,
To the last, to its ending,
Till the punishing blows are ended for good.
I swear this night of terror
Shall not have passed in vain;
I swear this morning I'll not live unchanged,
as if I were no wiser even now,
even now.

נִנְדַרְתִּי הַנֶּדֶר: לְזָכֹר אֶת הַכֹּל.
לְזָכֹר—וְדַבֵּר לֹא לְשִׁכְחָה.
דַּבֵּר לֹא לְשִׁכְחָה—עַד דּוֹר עֲשִׂירִי,
עַד שֶׁךְ עֲלֻבוֹנִי,
עַד כָּלֵם, עַד כְּלָהֶם,
עַדִּי יִכְלוּ כָּל שְׁבִטֵי מוֹסְרֵי.
קוֹנָם אִם לְרִיק
יַעֲבֹר לַיִל הַזֶּעֶם,
קוֹנָם אִם לְבִקָּר
אֶחָזֵר לְסוּרֵי
וּמֵאוֹם לֹא אֶלְמֵד
גַּם הַפְּעָם.

Excerpt from "A Vow"
Avraham Shlonsky

Reader

On this holiest of days, we recall the hunted, the haunted, and the persecuted, fellow Jews who might otherwise be lost to untold history. Memories we can hardly speak of pierce the brain and petrify the soul. We see their faces and ask the eternal question: Why?!

We stifle our screams, bury them deep within our hearts, as echoes of the martyrs' prayers ascend through the years. Listen. They beat the breast and cry: *Shema Koleinu!* Hear our voices!

While in the world of the everyday, the usual sun routinely and unashamed, throws its wealth of beams at every guilty threshold.

Congregation

Pure souls may pray for forgiveness for their sins, while God weeps, mourning at nameless graves.

Cantor

These I recall and pour my heart out.

How the arrogant have devoured us!

אֱלֹהֵי אֶזְכָּרָה
וְנִפְשֵׁי עָלַי אֲשַׁפְּכָה.

First Temple

בית המקדש הראשון

Reader

King Solomon instructed that in the City of Peace no iron tool be used to hone perfect stones for the *Beit HaMikdash*. No sound of hammer or chisel could be heard on the Temple Mount, for fear that a tool can all too easily be used as a weapon.

I Kings 6:7

The grandeur of Jerusalem's Temple became the envy of Babylon. Our Sages say that when Nebuzaradan "The Slaughterer" broke through the Temple gates, he found the blood of the prophet Zechariah seething in the courtyard. He demanded to know: "What is the meaning of this?" When he threatened to comb their flesh with iron combs, they told him the truth: "There was a prophet among us who chastised us for our sins and we killed him. For many years now his blood cannot rest."

Babylonian Talmud
Gittin 57b

Nebuzaradan said: "I will appease him." He killed the members of the Great and Small Sanhedrins; he slaughtered youths and maidens; and then the school-children. Altogether, 940,000 souls. Still the blood continued to boil, whereupon Nebuzaradan cried: "Zechariah, Zechariah! I have slain the best of them; do you want all of them destroyed?" At last, the blood sank into the ground.

Reader

On the ninth day of Av, toward evening, the Holy Temple was set to the torch.

Babylonian Talmud
Taanit 29a

Our Sages taught: Young priests gathered with the keys to the Sanctuary in their hands. They ascended to the rooftops and declared: "Master of the World! Since we have not proven to be trustworthy custodians, let the keys be given back to You." They threw the keys toward Heaven. A Hand emerged to receive them, and the priests threw themselves into the fire.

Those who escaped the sword were taken as slaves and led into captivity. Only the poorest of Jerusalem were permitted to stay as field-hands.

Cantor and Congregation

A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping!
Rachel is weeping for her children,
refusing to be comforted for her children,
for they are no more.

קוֹל בְּרָמָה נִשְׁמָע נְהִי
בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים
רָחֵל מִבְּכָה עַל-בְּנֵיהָ מְאַנָּה
לְהַנְחִיחַם עַל-בְּנֵיהָ כִּי אֵינָנּוּ.

Jeremiah 31:15

Second Temple

בית המקדש השני

Reader

In the time of Hadrian, Emperor of Rome, the study and practice of Torah were forbidden. Israel's leaders said: How to survive without the Tree of Life? Why live when the soul is dead?" And so they taught and learned and did God's will.

Babylonian Talmud
Menachot 29b

Israel's ten leaders were taken and doomed.

Shimon ben Gamaliel was among the slain. Remembering his wisdom and witnessing his death, disciples exclaimed: "Is this Torah, and this its reward?"

Job 13:15

Rabbi Yishmael was next to die. In pain and anguish, he cried out, and at his cry the Heavens trembled: "Accept this; affirm Me; for if you fail, the world must crumble into chaos!" Yishmael accepted his fate and said: "I will trust in You even though You slay me."

Reader

Akiba defied the decree and continued to teach, so he was among those taken. He was led to his death at the time when the Shema is recited. As his flesh was flayed, he said:

... שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל
וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

“Even now?” his disciples asked.

He replied: “All my life this verse has troubled me. ‘Love Adonai your God with all your being’ Love God, though you must die for it! I always prayed to be able to fulfill this mitzvah and now I can!”

Babylonian Talmud
Brachot 61b

And with his final breath he said: “*Adonai Echad!* Adonai is One!”
Prolonging the last word until life was gone, he affirmed God in a godless world.

Reader

The Romans had forbidden the ordination of Rabbis, decreeing death to ordainer and ordained, as well as destruction for any city in which ordination would take place. Rabbi Yehudah ben Bava ordained five in the hills between two cities, Shefaram and Usha. When the enemy soldiers were upon them, Rabbi Yehudah told his disciples to flee. “What will become of you?” they cried. He answered:

Babylonian Talmud
Sanhedrin 14a

“I shall place myself before them
as an immovable rock.”

הריני מוטל לפניהם
כאבן שאין לה הופכים.

So he did – and the Roman lances struck him down. But the disciples escaped.

Reader

The Ten included other teachers, ten teachers among many. Dying, they did not perish. Their faith is immortal; their God eternal.

Cantor and Congregation

These I recall and pour my heart out.
How the arrogant have devoured us

אֱלֹהֵי אֶזְכָּרָה
וְנַפְשִׁי עָלַי אֶשְׁפָּכָה.

The Crusades

מסעי הצלב

Reader

In the days of the Crusades, whole communities of Jews were massacred in the Rhineland. In one city, young and old donned armor and stood behind their leader, Rabbi Kalonymos ben Meshullam. The gate was smashed, their friends had fled, and death reached out with sword and fire. They said to one another: "Let us be strong and bear the yoke of our faith, for only in this world can the enemy kill us"

Personal account:
Rabbi Ephraim ben
Jacob of Bonn
12th century

"...The first upon whom the enemies came in the courtyard were some of the most devout... These pious men refused to flee into the inner chambers in order to buy one more hour of life. No, they sat wrapped in their prayer shawls ready to fulfill the will of their Maker. The enemies first overwhelmed them with stones and arrows and then hewed them down with swords. When those in the inner chambers saw the courage of the righteous ones they cried, 'The time has come!'

...The blood of men commingled with the blood of their wives, the blood of children and babes with the blood of their mothers. All were slaughtered that day for the sake of the Oneness of the awesome name of God. One who hears this, is not your very soul shaken? ... Eleven hundred were sacrificed in one day."

Reader

In another city, as the flames mounted high, the martyrs began to sing a song that began softly but rose to a crescendo. Those who heard it came and asked: "What kind of song is this? We have never heard such a sweet melody." It was the Aleinu: "It is upon us to praise the God of All..."

So it was for us long ago. And only yesterday we drained once more the cup of sorrow.

Congregation

*All this has come upon us, yet we have not forgotten You,
nor been false to Your covenant.*

*For Your sake were we slain all the day long,
and treated like sheep for the slaughter.*

Cantor

Av HaRachamim who dwells on high,
in wondrous mercy, will remember
with compassion
the pious, upright and blameless,
the holy communities,
who laid down their lives
for the sanctification of God's name.
They were loved and
lovely in their lifetimes.
In death they were not parted.
They were swifter than eagles and
stronger than lions
to carry out the will of their Maker
and the desire of their Rock.

May our God remember them for good
together with the other
righteous of the world....
And in the Holy Writings it says:
"Why should the nations say:
'Where is their God?'"

אָב הַרְחָמִים שׁוֹכֵן מְרוֹמִים.
בְּרַחֲמָיו הָעֲצוּמִים
הוּא יִפְקֹד בְּרַחֲמִים
הַחֲסִידִים וְהַתְּמִימִים.
קְהֵלוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ שִׁמְסְרוּ נַפְשָׁם
עַל קְדוּשַׁת הַשֵּׁם.
הִנָּאֲהָבִים וְהִנְעִימִים בְּחַיֵּיהֶם
וּבְמוֹתָם לֹא נִפְרְדוּ.
מִנְשָׁרִים קָלוּ וּמֵאֲרִיּוֹת גָּבְרוּ
לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹן קוֹנֵם וְחַפֵּץ צוּרָם.

יִזְכְּרֵם אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְטוֹבָה עִם
שְׂאֵר צְדִיקֵי עוֹלָם....
וּבְכַתְבֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ נֶאֱמַר:
"לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם
'אֵיזָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם?'"

Anonymous
late 11th-early 12th
century
Germany.
In commemoration of
the First Crusade of
1096

Let it be known among
the nations in our sight
that You avenge the spilled
blood of Your servants.

יִדְעֵם בְּגוֹיִם לְעֵינֵינוּ
נִקְמַת דָּם עֲבָדֶיךָ הַשְּׁפוּףִי:

As it says: "For God who exacts
retribution for spilled blood
remembers them. God does not forget
the cry of the humble."

וְאוֹמֵר: "כִּי דוֹרֵשׁ דָּמִים
אוֹתָם זָכַר לֹא שָׁכַח
צִעֲקַת עֲנָוִים."

And it says: "God will execute judgement
among the corpse-filled nations,
crushing the rulers of the mighty land;
from the brook by the wayside he will drink.
Then he will hold his head high".

וְאוֹמֵר: "יִדְיִן בְּגוֹיִם מְלֵא גְוִיּוֹת
מִחַץ רֹאשׁ עַל אֶרֶץ רַבָּה.
מִנַּחַל בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׁתָּה
עַל כֵּן יָרִים רֹאשׁוֹ."

Expulsion from Spain and Inquisition גירוש מספרד ואינקויזיציה

Reader

"I heard from some elders who fled from The Inquisitor of Spain that one of the boats was infected with plague. The captain put the passengers ashore at some uninhabited place. Most of them died of starvation, while some gathered up all their strength and set out on foot in search of some settlement.

Solomon ibn Verga
15th century
Spain, Portugal, Turkey,
Flanders

There was one among them who struggled on foot together with his wife and two children. The wife, unaccustomed to such difficult terrain, grew faint and died. The husband carried his children along until both he and they fainted from hunger. When he regained consciousness, he found that his two children were dead.

In anguish, he rose to his feet and said, 'Ribono Shel Olam! You are going to great effort that I might desert my faith. But know for a certainty that even against the will of Heaven, a Jew I am and a Jew I shall remain! And neither what you have brought upon me nor whatever You may yet bring upon me will be of any avail.'

Thereupon he gathered some earth and grass, covered the boys, and went forth in search of a settlement."

Pogroms

פוגרומים

Reader

One day Hasidim came to inform the great Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav of rekindled persecutions against the Jews of the Ukraine. The Master listened and said nothing. They told him of violent pogroms in certain villages. Again, the Master listened and said nothing. They told him of slaughtered families, of desecrated cemeteries, of women raped, and children burned alive.

The Master listened and shook his head. "I know," he whispered. "I know what you want, I know. You want me to shout with pain, weep in despair. I know, I know. But I will not, you hear me? I will not."

After a long silence he did begin to shout, more and more loudly not to rail against God Almighty, but to instruct his people: "Gevalt, Yidden! Jews, for Heaven's sake, do not despair! Gevalt, Yidden! We are forbidden to despair!"

Cantor

All the world is a very
narrow bridge.
But the most important thing
is not to be afraid.

כָּל הָעוֹלָם בְּלוּ
גִּשְׁרֵי צָר מְאֹד,
וְהֵעִיקָר לֹא לִפְחֹד בְּלָל.

Rabbi Nachman of
Bratzlav
19th Century
Ukraine

Shoah

שואה

Reader

Etty Hillesum from Holland served as a volunteer social worker at Westerbork, a German transit camp. Courageously, she advocated for her people, comforted them, and provided material support any way that she could. Beginning in 1942, Jews and other "foreigners" were sent from there to Auschwitz in freight cars every Tuesday.

In 1943, Etty herself was imprisoned in Westerbork. She was 29 and kept a diary.

Reader

"The sky is full of birds, the purple lupins stand up so regally and peacefully, two little old women have sat down for a chat, the sun is shining on my face – and right before our eyes, mass murder... The whole thing is simply beyond comprehension."

"It is sometimes hard to take in and comprehend, O God, what those created in Your likeness do to each other in these disjointed days. But I no longer shut myself away in my room, God. I try to look things straight in the face, even the worst crimes.... I try to face up to Your world, God, not to escape from reality into beautiful dreams — though I believe that beautiful dreams can exist beside even the most horrible reality. And I continue to praise Your creation, God, despite everything."

Reader

On the 7th of September, 1943, two months before her murder in Auschwitz, she threw a postcard with her final words out of a train: "Opening the Bible at random I find this: 'Adonai is my Rock, my Rescuer in whom I seek refuge, my Shield, Beacon of Salvation and my Stronghold.' I am sitting on my rucksack in the middle of a full freight car. Father, Mother, and Mischa are a few cars away. In the end, the departure came without warning.... We left the camp singing."

Psalms 18:3

I believe with perfect faith
in the coming of the Messianic Age.
And even if it be delayed,
I will await its arrival.
Despite all this, I believe.

אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין בְּאַמוּנָה שְׁלֵמָה
בְּבִיאַת הַמְּשִׁיחַ
וְאֵף עַל פִּי שְׂיִתְמָהּ
אֲחַכֶּה לוֹ עִם כָּל זֶה אֲנִי מֵאֲמִין

Moses Maimonides,
12th Century
Spain and Egypt

Reader

Adonai our God, we have testified to Your presence in heaven and earth.
But Your Presence has been an absence, Your Call a silence. Our Sages wrote
in Your name: "If you are My witnesses, I am God, and if you are not My
witnesses, it is as if I am not God."

We have struggled to live for You, and see what our fate has been!?

Is not Your fate bound up with ours?

How can Your presence abide in a world where murder rules?!

Pesikta deRav
Kahana 12:6
6th- 7th century
Israel

Congregation

Without Jews there is no Jewish God.

If we leave this world, the light will go out in Your tent.

Since Abraham knew You in a cloud, You have burned in every Jewish face.

You have glowed in every Jewish eye, and we have made You in our image.

Jacob Glatstein
translated from Yiddish
by Nathan Halper

Reader

Now the lifeless skulls add up to millions.

The stars are going out around You.

The memory of You is dimming,

The Kingdom will soon be over.

Jewish seed and flower are embers.

The dew cries in the dead grass!

The Jewish dream and reality are ravished; they die together.

Your witnesses are sleeping: Infants, women, young men, old.

Even the Thirty-Six, Your saints, pillars of Your world, have fallen into a dead,
and everlasting sleep.

Congregation

Who will dream You?

Who will remember You?

Who will deny You?

Who will yearn for You?

Who, on a lonely bridge, will leave You, in order to return?

Reader

Silence. Where in this Holocaust is the word of God?

Not in the storm, nor in the shaking earth, nor in the fire, but only in the still, small voice within us.

The world was silent; the world was still. And behind the silence, a witness to the sin of silence. What pains were taken to save cathedrals, museums, monuments from destruction. Treasures of art must be preserved; they are the song of the human soul! While in the camps and streets of Europe mother and father and child lay dying, many looked away. To look away from evil: Is this not the sin of all 'good' people?

Reader

And yet even in the inferno, even there were those we call חסידי אמות העולם -- the Righteous of the Nations. Some gave their very lives to keep Jews from harm. Who can measure such courage? When so many were afraid to act, they bore witness to the greatness men and women can reach. Look and take heart, if ever such days should return, remember them and find courage. Consider what can be done, what must be done to cherish in our souls the image of God.

Congregation

*I shall not die, but live, to tell of the deeds
of the Eternal God.*

Teach us, O God, to remember that we are the remnant of a decimated people.

Will we ever recover those who were lost?

That story is still being written.

לֹא-אָמוֹת כִּי-אֶחָיָהּ
וְאִסְפָּר מֵעֵשִׂי יְהוָה.

Psalms 118:17

Farhud and Expulsion from Muslim and Arab Lands

פְּרִהוּד וְחֹרְבָן קְהִילוֹת
אֶרְצוֹת עֵרָב

Reader

For more than two thousand, five hundred years Jewish life flourished in lands from Yemen to Turkey, from Afghanistan to Morocco. These are the words of one dear congregant who was an eyewitness to the beginning of the end of Jewish life in Muslim lands.

Reader

“My name is Dr. Naim Dallal and I am an Iraqi Jew. I was born in Baghdad in 1923. By the 1930s the Jewish population in Baghdad was thriving. However, that community is no more. As a result of persecution, we are now scattered throughout the world. I am a part of that scattering.....

From the interviews
conducted by
Dr.Naim Dallal's
grandchildren
Lindsay, Benji, and
Nathan McLean

On the Festival of Shavuot, June 1, 1941, the Farhud in Iraq began. Jews were attacked and murdered in the streets. I still recall the sight of corpses and blood.

I was riding a bus. The rioters came and took everybody out and they killed them. With me, they thought I was Muslim, and so I ran away.

Because the pogrom was during the summertime, people slept on the roofs, open air. I tell you, that was terrible, because you could hear the screams of people from far away. ‘Please, for the sake of Mohamed, for the sake of Alli, don’t kill us!’

I concluded there was a dark future for the Jews of Iraq. And I knew if we left, we could never return. Through tears, my mother begged me to stay. I could not convince them to come with me. When the plane took off, it was really difficult to leave the family. I looked at the river where we spent our youth, and I knew that was farewell.”

Those Who Died in Freedom's Cause

במאבק לחירות

Reader

We remember, too, the men and women who responded to the call of the prophets with: “*Hineini*. Here I am.” They gave their lives while struggling to right wrongs, to make peace, to save others from humiliation or harm. We remember them today not as martyrs or saints, but as human beings defined by their moral choices, their sacrifices, and their service.

Reader

Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were civil rights activists who, together with James Chaney, volunteered to help with voter registration among African-Americans in Mississippi. They disappeared one night in June, 1964.

Andrew and Michael, raised in Jewish homes, had been inspired by the words of Rabbi Joachim Prinz the summer before. Speaking before a quarter of a million people at the historic March on Washington, Rabbi Prinz, once a Rabbi of Berlin Jews under Nazi rule, placed a challenge before the collective conscience of the world: “The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful, and the most tragic problem is silence.... [we] must not become a nation of onlookers. [We] must not remain silent.”

Goodman was 20, Chaney 21, and Schwerner 25 years old when they were murdered by members of the Ku Klux Klan.

Congregation

God commands:

"You shall not remain indifferent."

לֹא תוֹכַל לְהִתְעַלֵּם. Deuteronomy 22:3

God commands:

"Justice, justice shall you pursue."

צֶדֶק צְדָק תִּרְדֹּף. Deuteronomy 16:20

The prophet Amos taught:

*"Let justice roll down like waters;
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."*

וַיִּגַּל כַּמַּיִם מִשֶּׁפֶט
וַיִּצְדָּקָה כַּנַּחַל אֵיתָן. Amos 5:24

Reader

Daniel Pearl put himself in harm's way in order to inform the world of terror brewing. A dual citizen of the United States and Israel, he investigated in the Balkans, in Sudan, and in Iran. By 2002, at the age of 38, Pearl was the Wall Street Journal's bureau chief in South Asia. While investigating Islamic terrorism in Pakistan, he was abducted by Al Qaeda terrorists. A videotape of his murder preserves his last words: "My father is Jewish. My mother is Jewish. I am Jewish. Back in the town of B'nei Brak, there is a street named after my great-grandfather, Chayim Pearl, who was one of the founders of the town."

"His last words – "I am a Jew" -- were an assertion of his inalienable right to recognition of the human oneness in his specific identity. His was the ultimate judgment on the senseless brutality that took his young life."

Nadine Gordimer

Congregation

God commands:

*"Thou shalt not stand idly by while
your neighbour bleeds."*

לֹא תַעֲמֹד עַל-דַּם רֵעֲךָ. Leviticus 19:16

Hillel the Sage insists:

*"In a place where there are no
human beings, strive to be human."*

בְּמָקוֹם שֶׁאֵין אָנָשִׁים,
הִשְׁתַּדַּל לְהִיּוֹת אִישׁ. Pirkei Avot 2:16

Cantor

These I recall and pour my heart out.
How the arrogant have devoured us!

אֵלֶּה אֶזְכָּרָה
וְנִפְּשֵׁי עָלַי אֶשְׁפָּכָה.

Terror in Israel

טרור בישראל

Reader

In addition to the tremendous loss of life in Israel's many wars, 3,185 people have been killed by Palestinian violence and terror in Israel since its founding in 1948.

One of them was Marnie Kimmelman. In 1990, Marnie travelled from her home in Toronto to Israel with a tour group to work on a kibbutz and tour the country. On Shabbat afternoon, July 28th, 1990, Marnie went with some friends to the beach in Tel Aviv. Unbeknownst to them, a Hamas operative had just hours earlier planted a bomb in the sand. While Marnie was having the time of her life with her friends on the beach, the bomb went off. She died hours later. She was 17 years old.

Reader

Born in Jerusalem in 1922, Yitzhak Rabin, was at the centre of every major event of Israel's history for five decades. In 1948, he fought in the siege of Jerusalem during the War of Independence. He was army general turned statesman. He knew the frontlines of battle and was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Upon signing the Oslo Accords on the White House lawn on September 13, 1993, Prime Minister Rabin said: "Let me say to you, the Palestinians: We are destined to live together, on the same soil in the same land. We, the soldiers who have returned from battle stained with blood, we who have seen our relatives and friends killed before our eyes, we who have attended their funerals and cannot look into the eyes of their parents, we who have come

from a land where parents bury their children, we who have fought against you, the Palestinians — we say to you today in a loud and clear voice: Enough of blood and tears. Enough! We have no desire for revenge. We harbor no hatred toward you. We, like you, are people who want to build a home, to plant a tree, to love, live side by side with you — in dignity, in empathy, as human beings, as free people. We are today giving peace a chance and again saying to you: Let us pray that a day will come when we will say, Enough! farewell to arms!”

On July 26, 1994 Rabin spoke before the United States Congress: “I, serial number 30743, Lieutenant General in reserves Yitzhak Rabin, a soldier in the Israeli Defense Forces and in the army of peace, I, who have sent armies into fire and soldiers to their death, say today: ‘We sail onto a war which has no casualties, no wounded, no blood nor suffering. It is the only war which is a pleasure to participate in — the war for peace.’”

Reader

On November 4, 1995, at a peace rally in Tel Aviv, Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated by a radical Jewish opponent of his plan for peace. A blood-stained page of the Song of Peace, Shir LaShalom, was found in his breast pocket.

Let the sun rise,
and give the morning light.
The purest prayer
will not bring us back.

He whose candle was snuffed out
and was buried in the dust,
bitter tears won't wake him,
won't bring him back here.

תָּנוּ לְשֶׁמֶשׁ לְעֹלוֹת
לְבָקֵר לְהָאִיר.
הַזֹּכָה שְׁבַתְפָּלוֹת
אוֹתָנוּ לֹא תַחְזִיר.

Yaakov Rotblit and
Yair Rozenblum

מִי אֲשֶׁר כָּבָה נֵרוֹ
וּבְעַפָּר נִטְמָן,
בְּכִי מֵר לֹא יַעִירוֹ,
לֹא יַחְזִירוֹ לְבָאֵן.

No one can bring us back
from the deep, dark abyss.
Here, neither the songs of victory
nor the songs of praise will help.

So sing only a song for peace,
don't whisper a prayer.
It's better to sing a song of peace.
Shout it out loud!

Let the sun penetrate
through the flowers.
Don't look backward;
leave those who have departed.

Lift your eyes with hope,
not through rifle sights.
Sing a song for love,
not a song for wars.

Don't just say "someday."
Make that "someday" today!
(For it is no dream.)
And in every city square
raise your voices for peace.

אִישׁ אֹתָנוּ לֹא יָשִׁיב
מִבוֹר תַּחְתִּית אֶפֶל,
כָּאֵן לֹא יוֹעִילוּ לֹא שְׂמִיחַת הַנִּצְחוֹן
וְלֹא שִׁירֵי הַלֵּל.

לְכוּ, רַק שִׁירוּ שִׁיר לְשָׁלוֹם,
אַל תִּלְחָשׁוּ תַפְלָה!
מוֹטֵב תְּשִׁירוּ שִׁיר לְשָׁלוֹם
בְּצַעֲקָה גְדוֹלָה!

תָּנוּ לְשֶׁמֶשׁ לְחַדֵּר
מִבְּעַד לַפְּרָחִים.
אַל תִּבְיטוּ לְאַחֹר;
הַנִּיחוּ לַהוֹלְכִים.

שָׂאוּ עֵינַיִם בְּתַקְוָה,
לֹא דֶרֶךְ כְּבוֹנֹת.
שִׁירוּ שִׁיר לְאַהֲבָה
וְלֹא לְמִלְחָמוֹת!

אַל תִּגִּדוּ "יוֹם יָבוֹא".
הִבִּיאוּ אֶת הַיּוֹם
(כִּי לֹא חֵלוֹם הוּא)
וּבְכָל הַכְּפָרוֹת
הִרְיעוּ לְשָׁלוֹם!

Recent Rise in Anti-Semitism in the Diaspora

אנטישמיות בתפוצה

Reader

Some are shocked and perplexed; others are distressed, but not surprised. Hate crimes and violent anti-Semitism has reared its ugly head again across Europe – from France, to Germany, from Belgium and the United Kingdom, to the Netherlands and Sweden. Neo-Nazi parties are gaining popularity in Italy and Greece, Hungary and Ukraine.

And closer to home, deadly anti-Semitic attacks on synagogues in Pittsburgh and Poway, in a rabbi's home during Chanukah in Monsey, and in a kosher grocery store in Jersey City. Among the eleven slain at the Tree of Life Congregation, the most deadly attack on a North American House of Worship, was Joyce Fienberg, who grew up here at Holy Blossom Temple. She was educated and married here. And today she is mourned by many cousins here, including Past President Judy Winberg, who said, "I guess like most martyrs, Joyce would never have considered herself worthy of such a title. She would have simply said, 'She was in the right place at the wrong time.'"

Reader

Joyce made it her mission to help strengthen the Tree of Life Congregation. She joined the synagogue board and drove every morning to make the minyan. Oftentimes she picked up Moe Lebow on the way, since he had difficulty driving on his own. That was Joyce, thoughtful and generous. And that's why the family knew with complete certainty that Joyce was there on Shabbat Morning, Oct. 27, 2018, when the heavily armed white supremacist stormed the building.

Cantor

It is a tree of life for those who hold it fast,
and all who cling to it find happiness.

Its ways are ways of pleasantness
and all its paths are peace.

Turn us toward You, Adonai,
and we shall return. Renew our days as of old.

עֵץ-חַיִּים הַיָּא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ
וְתַמְכִּיהָ מֵאֲשֶׁר:
דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי-נְעִים
וְכָל-נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:
הַשִּׁבְנוּ, יְהוָה, אֵלֶיךָ וְנִשׁוּבָה,
חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

Proverbs 3:18,17

Lamentations 5:21

Reader

The Shabbat after the Tree of Life massacre a remarkable thing happened. Hundreds of Muslim Torontonians gathered to form Rings of Peace around twelve synagogues, just as we had done for local mosques in the immediate aftermath of the deadly attack on a mosque in Quebec City. Inside our sanctuary were hundreds of congregants and unaffiliated Jews. We were joined by people of other faiths and people of no faith. They came to be counted. They came to stand in solidarity against the world's most tenacious and pernicious hatred.

Since that time, we've planted a tree in Joyce's memory at Holy Blossom Temple. It's a young sapling now, but it will grow to be a strong and shady oak. It is a Tree of Life.

Congregation

God commands:

"This day I call heaven and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live."

הַעֲדֹתֵי בְכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם
וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ הַחַיִּים וְהַמָּוֶת נָתַתִּי
לְפָנֶיךָ הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה וּבַחֲרוֹתִי
בְּחַיִּים לְמַעַן תַּחְיֶה אֶתְּהָ וְזֵרְעֶךָ.

Deuteronomy 30:19

Reader

Why do we devote this hour to remembering the martyred of our people?

So their lives are not lost entirely to the pages of history or the pages of the daily news. And moreover, when we recall their names and tell their stories, their impact and imprint on this world are reinforced. They shape us. They teach us where we come from and to Whom we belong. They remind us what we will stand for and what we will not stand for.

Reader

The Prophet Isaiah promised:

And the ransomed of the Eternal One shall be restored and return to Zion singing, with everlasting joy as their crown. Joy and gladness shall be theirs: suffering and sorrow shall take flight.

וּפְדוּלֵי יְהוָה יִשׁוּבוּן וּבָאוּ צִיּוֹן
בְּרִנָּה וּשְׂמֵחַת עוֹלָם עַל-רֵאשָׁם
שִׂשׁוֹן וּשְׂמֵחָה יִשְׂיָגוּן נְסוּ יָגוֹן
וְאֲנָחָה.

Isaiah 51:11

Congregation

*It is too small a task for you to be
My servant merely to preserve the tribes
of Jacob and to restore the survivors of Israel.
I will make you a Light Unto The Nations,
so that My saving power may reach
to the ends of the earth.*

נִקַּל מִהַיּוֹתֶךָ לִי עֲבֹד לְהַקִּים
אֶת-שְׁבִטֵי יַעֲקֹב וּנְצוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
לְהַשִּׁיב וּנְתַתִּיךָ לְאֹר גּוֹיִם
לְהִיּוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי עַד-קֶצֶה הָאָרֶץ.

Isaiah 49:6

Reader

We remember the martyrs of our People, too, in order to raise our own awareness of our own good fortune. As we cast our eyes over millennia of blood and tears, we see how rare and precious is this moment. We are blessed to live at a time with vibrant Jewish life both here in the North American Diaspora and in Israel. Let us not take it for granted. Let us not squander this moment. Let us embrace it and protect it. Let us celebrate it and praise God for it.

Cantor

A Song of Ascent for David:

I rejoice when they said to me,

Let us go up to the House of God.

Now we stand within your gates,

O Jerusalem!

Jerusalem, built to be a city where

people are knit together as one!

A place to which tribes would make

pilgrimage, the tribes of the Eternal,

—as was enjoined upon Israel—

to praise the name of the Eternal God.

There the thrones of judgment stood,

thrones of the House of David.

Pray for the well-being of Jerusalem;

“May those who love you be at peace.

May there be well-being within

your ramparts, peace in your citadels.”

For the sake of my kin and my friends,

I pray for your well-being;

for the sake of the House of Adonai,

our God, I seek your good.

Psalm 122

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

שִׂמְחָתִי בְּאִמְרֵיהֶם לִי

בֵּית יְהוָה נִלְקָה:

עֲמָדוֹת הָיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ בְּשַׁעְרֵיךָ

יְרוּשָׁלַם:

יְרוּשָׁלַם הַבְּנוּיָה

כְּעִיר שְׁחֻבָּרָה-לָהּ יַחְדָּו:

שָׁמָּה עָלוּ שְׁבֻטִים שְׁבֻטֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל

עֲדוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָדוֹת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה:

כִּי שָׁמָּה | יִשְׁבּוּ כִסְאוֹת

לְמִשְׁפַּט כִּסְאוֹת לְבַיִת דָּוִד:

שָׁאוֹל שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם

יִשְׁלִי אֶהְבִּיךָ:

יְהִי-שְׁלוֹם בְּחִילְךָ

שְׁלוֹהַּ בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיךָ:

לְמַעַן אֲחִי וְרַעִי

אֲדַבְּרָה-נָא שְׁלוֹם בְּךָ:

לְמַעַן בֵּית-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

אֲבַקֶּשׂה טוֹב לְךָ:



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