

Prayers of Comfort

JEWISH BLESSING OF THE MOURNERS

Those who are worn out and crushed by this mourning, let your hearts consider this:

this is the path that has existed from the time of creation and will exist forever.

Many have drunk from it and many will yet drink.

As was the first meal, so shall be the last.

May the master of comfort comfort you.

Blessed are those who comforts the mourners.

WE REMEMBER THEM

by Sylvan Kamens & Rabbi Jack Riemer

At the rising sun and at its going down; We remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter; We remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring; We remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer; We remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn; We remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends; We remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as 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 decisions that are difficult to make; We remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share; We remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs; We remember them.

For as long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as, We remember them.

DO NOT STAND AT MY GRAVE AND WEEP

by Mary Elizabeth Frye

Do not stand at my grave and weep I am not there.

I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.

I am the diamond glints on snow.

I am the sunlight on ripened grain.

I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in circled flight.

I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry; I am not there.

I did not die.

WHEN ALL THAT'S LEFT IS LOVE

by Rabbi Allen S. Maller

When I die

If you need to weep

Cry for someone

Walking the street beside you.

You can love me most by letting

Hands touch hands, and Souls touch souls.

You can love me most by

Sharing your Simchas (goodness) and

Multiplying your Mitzvot (acts of kindness).

You can love me most by

Letting me live in your eyes

And not on your mind.

And when you say Kaddish for me

Remember what our

Torah teaches,

Love doesn't die People do.

So when all that's left of me is love

Give me away.

GOD GIVES AND GOD TAKES

by Rabbi Allen S. Maller

God gives opportunities for us to love but not forever.

God takes opportunities away after a while.

So don't hesitate or delay or curse the darkness while remaining mired in sadness and hopelessness, because God gives; and God takes away.

Blessed be the name of the LORD.

But why bless the LORD when God takes away?

Because if the opportunities were always there, we would wait until the time was just right and never make the leap, and more of life would slip away.

So God gives and God takes; Blessed be God's name.

KRIEH – TEARING THE CLOTH

by Harold M. Schulweis

Why rend the clothes?

So strange to a tradition

that admonishes

not to break or to destroy

It is for the sake of anger

against the unfairness of the world

anger against him or her, God or self?

Is tearing the cloth to give outer expression

to the tattered soul within?

Or is it a parallelism

the death of a person like the burning of a Sefer Torah

for which tearing the clothes is performed?

The burial of a human like the burial of a Torah

A human being is like a Sefer Torah

Studied, it has wisdom to impart

Lived, it has goodness to convey.

Rend the garments for the "Torah-mensch"

Each of us a letter in the Torah scroll

Together our lives are intertwined

Our common fate and faith

our common destiny

find us like the stitches of the parchment

when any of us is lost

The holy text is torn.

In memory we are mended.

WHEN WILL I BE MYSELF AGAIN

by Rabbi Lewis John Eron

"When will I be myself again?"

Some Tuesday, perhaps,

In the late afternoon,

Sitting quietly with a cup of tea,

And a cookie;

Or Wednesday, same time or later,

You will stir from a nap and see her;

You will pick up the phone to call her;

You will hear her voice – unexpected advice –

And maybe argue.

And you will not be frightened,

And you will not be sad,

And you will not be alone,

Not alone at all,

And your tears will warm you.

But not today,

And not tomorrow,

And not tomorrow's tomorrow,

But some day,

Some Tuesday, late in the afternoon,

Sitting quietly with a cup of tea,

And a cookie;

And you will be yourself again.

TO ONE IN SORROW

by Grace Noll Crowell

Let me come in where you are weeping, friend,

And let me take your hand.

I, who have known a sorrow such as yours,

Can understand.

Let me come in -- I would be very still

Beside you in your grief;

I would not bid you cease your weeping, friend,

Tears can bring relief.

Let me come in -- I would only breathe a prayer,

And hold your hand,

For I have known a sorrow such as yours,

And understand.

TO FALL IN BATTLE

by Kaila Shabat

They came to tell me that you fell in the battle for the Chinese Farm,
their faces streaked with sweat, and tears that were for me.
Then they put you in the ground beneath the mountain where you were born,
beside the friends with whom you played and fought and died.
Your little boy did not understand, he smiled and skipped and stopped
to pick wild cyclamen, which I placed on your grave.
I saw their tears blending with the rain, their cold hands clasped mine warmly
but a shield of shock protected me from the pain.
Now I wander the long white halls and in the shuffling of slippers
I listen for the thud of your boots coming towards me.
The doctor behind his desk says without saying what I will not understand.
"Others have learned to live with the death of a loved one".
"Then they knew not love!"
"You are young and beautiful, there will be another man."
"For me there is no other!"
"What about your little son? You have a duty to him."
"To raise him to die in battle?"

JEWISH PROVERBS

What soap is for the body, tears are for the soul.

— *Jewish Proverb*

The 'gift' of grief is that it presents us with the opportunity to heal and grow.

— *Jewish Proverb*

To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven.

— *Ecclesiastes*

Say not in grief 'he is no more' but in thankfulness that he was.

— *Hebrew Proverb*

As long as we live, they too will live; for they are now are a part of us; as we remember them.

— *Jewish Prayer*

God is closest to those with broken hearts.

— *Jewish Proverb*

A MOTHER'S PARABLE

by Temple Baily

The young mother set her foot on the path of Life. "Is the way long?" she asked. And her Guide said, "Yes, and the way is hard. And you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

But the young mother was happy, and she would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children, and gathered flowers for them along the way, and bathed with them in the streams, and the sun shone on them, and life was good, and the young mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this."

Then night came with the storm, and the path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold, and the mother drew them close and covered them with her mantle. And the children said, "Oh, Mother, we are not afraid, for you are near, and no harm can come." And the mother said, "This is better than the brightest of days, for I have taught my children courage."

And the morning came and there was a hill ahead, and the children climbed and grew weary. And the mother was weary, but at all times she said to the children, "A little patience and we are there." So the children climbed, and when they reached the top they said, "We could not have done it without you, Mother." And the mother, when she lay down that night, looked up at the stars and said, "This is a better day than the last, for my children have learned fortitude in the face of difficulty. Yesterday I gave them courage. Today I have given them strength."

And the next day came strange clouds that darkened the earth — clouds of war and hate and evil, and the children groped and stumbled. And the mother said, "Look up! Lift your eyes to the light." And the children looked and saw above the clouds an Everlasting Glory, and it guided them beyond the darkness. And that night the mother said, "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."

And the days went on, and the months and the years, and the mother grew old, and she was small and bent. But her children were strong and tall and walked with courage. And when the way was hard, they helped their mother; and when the way was rough they lifted her, for she was as light as a feather; and at last they came to a hill, and beyond the hill they could see a shining road and golden gates flung wide. And the mother said, "I have reached the end of my journey. And now I know that the end is better than the beginning, for my children can walk alone, and their children after them."

And the children said, "You will always walk with us, Mother, even when you have gone through the gates."

And they stood and watched her as she went on alone, and the gates closed after her. And they said, "We cannot see her, but she is with us. A mother like ours is more than a memory. She is a living presence."