

## Yizkor Teaching

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To be engaged in the act of memory is to be engaged in a process of drawing near. Memory guides us into its orbit, our minds recalling and reliving the words, the wisdom, and the warmth of loved ones who have since passed beyond this life. Though as easily as we are driven toward memory, so too can we be driven away from it. Those same words, wisdom, and the warmth, unavoidably dimming from mind and from heart, as our lives here on Earth continue forward.

We come together today, on Yom Kippur, in this Yizkor service, tasked with the sacred work of remembering, the work of guiding ourselves back into the orbit of the deceased, drawing near to the everliving souls of the departed. We do so not just through thought, but through embodying the experience of those who have passed. Yom Kippur is a day where we ourselves draw near to the end, if only temporarily. Foregoing that which sustains us: food, drink, intimacy, and meditating on the fragility of life. We ask who will live and who will die, and in doing so, take one small step toward those who have since passed.

We honor the memories of parents, grandparents, siblings, children, and friends. Those who have no one left to remember them. Those whose souls have departed while the world has beared witness. The hundreds of thousands, near and far, affected by our everyday reality.

We pray Yizkor. May God remember. So that when our memory fades, God's will remain. We come together to place the spark of our loved ones within the ner tamid, God's eternal light. וְיִצְרֹר בְּצִרּוֹר הַחַיִּים, that God may bind the souls of the departed within the bonds of eternal life.

Just as the Holy One, Blessed be God, fills the entire world, write our Sages, so too the soul fills the entire body.

Just as the Holy One, Blessed be God, sees but is not seen, so too does the soul see, but is not seen.

Just as the Holy One, Blessed be God, sustains the entire world, so too the soul sustains the entire body.

Just as the Holy One, Blessed be God, is pure, so too is the soul pure.

Just as the Holy One, Blessed be God, resides in a chamber within a chamber, in God's inner sanctum, so too the soul resides in a chamber within a chamber, in the innermost recesses of the body.

Let us enter into a moment of memory.

A coexisting of souls both past and present. And as we recite Enosh from Psalm 103, we are also reminded of the future: v'chesed adonai mei'olam v'ad olam al yi'reiav. God's steadfast love is eternal for all those who stand in awe. V'tzidkato livnei vanim. And God's righteousness extends to generations that are still to come.