

Only respectable behavior should take place in the presence of the deceased or in a funeral home or cemetery. Discussions should focus on the good personal qualities of the deceased, or on the funeral arrangements.

PART I

The Memorial Service begins here at the Funeral Home or at the Gravesite

(If the entire funeral is held at the gravesite, be sure to follow the instructions)

The leader recites the following paragraphs.

(Psalm 23) A psalm by David. The L-rd is my Shepherd; I shall lack nothing. He lays me down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He revives my soul; He directs me in paths of righteousness for the sake of His Name. Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff – they will comfort me. You will prepare a table for me before my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup is full. Only goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the House of the L-rd for many long years.

“Adon Olom” (L-rd of the Universe)¹

L-rd of the universe, Who reigned
before anything was created –
at the time when He made all by His will,
then was His Name proclaimed King.
And after all things will be uplifted,
the Awesome One will reign alone.
He was, He is, and He shall be in glory.
He is One, and there is no other
to compare to Him, to call His equal.

¹ A prayer from the traditional *Siddur* prayer-book liturgy.

Without beginning, without end –
power and dominion belong to Him.
He is my G-d and my ever-living Redeemer,
the strength of my lot in time of distress.
He is my banner and my refuge,
my portion on the day I call.
Into His hand I entrust my spirit
when I sleep and when I wake.
And with my soul, my body too,
the L-rd is with me, I shall not fear.

Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted and upraised is the Name of the King Who rules over kings, the Holy One, Blessed is He, for He is the First and the Last, and aside from Him there is no [other] G-d.² His Name is exalted beyond every blessing and praise.³ Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity. Blessed be the Name of the L-rd, from this time and forever.⁴

Eulogy for _____ of Blessed Memory

[The eulogist should consult with the close family members to prepare a few paragraphs in memory and praise of the person who passed away, including some words of Torah. The Director of Ask Noah International is available for consulting. It can conclude with the following statement:]

Today, _____ of blessed memory, advances on from our gates, to enter through the heavenly gates. His (her) good deeds praise him (her) here, and his (her) good deeds will surely praise him (her) there.

The eulogist mentions the names and relationships of the surviving close relatives, and then speaks about the life and good deeds and qualities of the dearly departed. Family members and friends who wish may then speak in turn.

² Cf. Isaiah 44:6.

³ Cf. Nehemiah 9:5.

⁴ Psalms 113:2.

The leader encourages the following:

Giving charity in honor and memory of a dearly departed soul is a righteous tradition. Those who wish to give charity in honor and memory of _____ may donate to one or more proper charities. The Divine service of charitable giving dates back to Abraham, as G-d said (Genesis 18:19): “For I love him [Abraham] because he commands his children and household after him that they shall keep the way of G-d to do charity and justice...” Charity is an act of goodness and kindness, and Gentiles have an obligation to give charity and to be concerned about helping those who are physically in need. This also applies to helping those who are spiritually in need, by financially supporting outreach to more people about observance and study of the Seven Noahide Commandments. And now more than ever, “Great is charity, because it brings the Redemption closer.”

PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTED SOUL⁵

May G-d remember the soul of _____, son (daughter) of _____ and _____, who has gone on to his (her) world. By virtue of our prayers on his (her) behalf, and the intentions of those who plan, without a vow, to donate proper charity on his (her) behalf, may his (her) soul be bound in the Bond of Life together with the souls of the righteous; and let us say: Amen.

If the service is held at a funeral home or other location, proceed now to the gravesite which has been prepared for the burial.

⁵ This prayer was composed by Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet.

PART 2

AT THE GRAVESITE, THE ABOVE SERVICE CONTINUES HERE

Repeat Psalm 23 here only if the above service was not at the gravesite.

(Psalm 23) A psalm by David. The L-rd is my Shepherd; I shall lack nothing. He lays me down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters. He revives my soul; He directs me in paths of righteousness for the sake of His Name. Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff – they will comfort me. You will prepare a table for me before my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; my cup is full. Only goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the House of the L-rd for many long years.

The leader recites the following Psalms as meditations on earthly life. The mourners may recite along with him:

Psalms 49:1-10,16-19

For the Conductor, by the sons of Korach, a psalm. Hear this all you peoples; listen, all you inhabitants of the world; sons of common folk and sons of nobility, rich and poor alike. My mouth speaks wisdom, and the thoughts of my heart are understanding. I incline my ear to the parable; I will unravel my riddle upon the harp. Why am I afraid in times of trouble? [Because] the sins I trod upon surround me. There are those who rely on their wealth, who boast of their great riches. Yet a man cannot redeem his brother, nor pay his ransom to G-d. The redemption of their soul is too costly, and forever unattainable. Can one live forever, never to see the grave? ... But G-d will redeem my soul from the hands of the grave, for He will take me, *Selah*. Do not fear when a man grows rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies he will take nothing, his glory will not descend after him. For he [alone] praises himself in his lifetime; but [all] will praise you if you better yourself.

Psalms 139:1-18

For the Conductor, by David, a psalm. O L-rd, You have probed me, and You know. You know my sitting down and my standing up; You perceive my thought from afar. You encircle my going about and my lying down; You are familiar with all my paths. For there was not yet a word on my tongue – and behold, L-rd, You knew it all. Back and front You have restricted me, and you have laid Your hand upon me. Knowledge [to escape You] is beyond me; it is exalted, I cannot know it. Where can I go [away] from Your spirit? And where can I flee from Your Presence? If I ascend to the heavens, You are there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold, You are there. Were I to take up wings as the dawn and dwell in the furthest part of the sea, there, too, Your hand would guide me; Your right hand would hold me. Were I to say, “Surely the darkness will shadow me,” then the night would be as light around me. Even the darkness obscures nothing from You; and the night shines like the day – the darkness is as light. For You created my mind; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will thank You, for I was formed in an awesome and wondrous way; unfathomable are Your works, though my soul perceived much. My essence was not hidden from You even while I was born in concealment, formed in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my unshaped form, and all [happenings] are recorded in Your book, even those to be formed in future days – to Him they are the same. How precious are Your thoughts to me, O G-d! How overwhelming are their beginnings! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the sand, even if I were to remain awake and always with You.

“Aleinu” Prayer⁶

All present can recite together, if they have a copy:

We bend the knee, bow down, and offer praise, before the supreme King of kings, the Holy One blessed be He, Who stretches forth the heavens and establishes the earth, the seat of whose glory is in the heavens above, and the abode of Whose majesty is in the loftiest heights. He is our G-d; there is none else. Truly, He is our King; there is nothing besides Him, as it is written in His Torah: “Know this day and take unto your heart that the L-rd is G-d; in the heavens above and upon the earth below there is nothing else.”⁷

And therefore we hope to You, L-rd our G-d, that we may speedily behold the splendor of your might, to banish idolatry from the earth –and false gods will be utterly destroyed; to perfect the world under the sovereignty of the Almighty. All mankind shall invoke Your Name, to turn to You all the wicked of the earth. Then all the inhabitants of the world will recognize and know that every knee should bend to You, every tongue should swear by Your Name. Before You, L-rd our G-d, they will bow and prostrate themselves, and give honor to the glory of Your Name; and they will all take upon themselves the yoke of Your kingdom. May You soon reign over them forever and ever, for kingship is Yours, and to all eternity You will reign in glory, as it is written in Your Torah: “The L-rd will reign forever and ever.”⁸ And it is said: “The L-rd shall be King over the entire earth; on that day the L-rd shall be One and His Name One.”⁹

Indeed, the righteous will extol Your Name; the upright will dwell in Your Presence.¹⁰

⁶ Cf. traditional *Siddur* prayer-book liturgy, “Aleinu” means “It is incumbent upon us” (namely, that which we proclaim in this prayer).

⁷ Deuteronomy 4:39.

⁸ Exodus 15:18.

⁹ Zechariah 14:9.

¹⁰ Psalms 140:14.

PRAYER FOR THE DEPARTED SOUL¹¹

Repeat this prayer here only if Part 1 above was not said at the gravesite.

May G-d remember the soul of _____, son (daughter) of _____ and _____, who has gone on to his (her) world. By virtue of our prayers on his (her) behalf, and the intentions of those who plan, without a vow, to donate proper charity on his (her) behalf, may his (her) soul be bound in the Bond of Life together with the souls of the righteous; and let us say: Amen.

The coffin is lowered into the grave. Several shovels should be at the site, and anyone who wishes may do the good and honorable deed of shoveling in some dirt to help fill the grave (as much as they wish, and turns should be taken).

After the coffin has been at least covered over, when the close family members are ready to depart, the guests form a line along the exit path. The close family members walk past along the line, and as they pass by, the guests each offer a few words of comfort and condolence.

Afterwards, anyone may then stay and continue to fill in the grave if they wish.

A reception with refreshments may later be held at a prearranged location, most preferably at the home of the deceased person, where guests may come and give condolences and speak about the good deeds and qualities of the deceased person.

¹¹ This prayer was composed by Rabbi J. Immanuel Schochet.