Yom Kippur 2003

אלה אזכרה

RETURN TO JEWISHNESS: Elie Wiesel

Remember: the Jew influences his environment only if he does not assimilate. Others will benefit from his experience to the degree that it is and remains unique. Only by assuming his Jewishness can he attain universality. The Jew who repudiates himself, claiming to do so for the sake of humanity, will inevitably repudiate humanity too. A lie cannot be a stepping stone to truth; it can only be an obstacle.... By working for his own people a Jew does not renounce his loyalty to mankind. On the contrary, he makes his most valuable contribution.... By struggling on behalf of Russian, Arab, or Polish Jews, I fight for human rights everywhere. By calling for peace in the Middle East, I take a stand against every aggression, every war. By protesting the fanatical exhortations to `holy wars' against my people, I protest against the stifling of freedom in Prague. By striving to keep alive the memory of the holocaust, I denounce the massacres in Biafra and the nuclear menace. Only by drawing on his unique experience can a Jew help others. A Jew fulfills his role as man only from inside his Jewishness.

PSALM 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the strength of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?

When the wicked, my enemies and my adversaries, came upon me
to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.
Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;
though war should rise against me, even then I will be confident.

One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after;
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.

For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion;
under the cover of His tent shall He hide me; He shall set me up
upon a rock.
And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies around me;
therefore I will offer in His tent sacrifices of joy;
I will sing, I will make music to the Lord.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry with my voice; be gracious to me, and
answer me.
Of You my heart said, seek my face; Your face, O Lord, will I seek!
Hide not Your face from me; put not your servant away in anger;
You have been my help; do not abandon me, nor forsake me,
O God of my salvation.

For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take
me up.
Teach me Your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path, because
of my enemies...

לְדָוִד, יהוה אוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי, מִמִּי אִירָא, יהוה מָעוֹז חַיַּי, מִמִּי אֶפְחָד.
בִּקְרֹב עָלַי מְרֵעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת בְּשָׂרִי, צָרַי וְאֹיְבַי לִי, הֵמָּה
כָּשְׁלוּ וְנָפָלוּ. אִם תַּחֲנֶה עָלַי מַחֲנֶה, לֹא יִירָא לִבִּי, אִם תָּקוּם עָלַי
מִלְחָמָה, בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בוֹטֵחַ. אַחַת שָׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת יהוה, אוֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ,
שִׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית יהוה כָּל יְמֵי חַיַּי, לַחֲזוֹת בְּנֹעַם יהוה, וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהֵיכָלוֹ. כִּי
יִצְפְּנֵנִי בְּסֻכֹּה בְּיוֹם רָעָה, יַסְתִּירֵנִי בְּסֵתֶר אָהֳלוֹ, בְּצוּר יְרוֹמְמֵנִי. וְעַתָּה
יָרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אֹיְבַי סְבִיבוֹתַי, וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְאָהֳלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה, אָשִׁירָה
וַאֲזַמְּרָה לַיהוה. שְׁמַע יהוה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא, וְחָנֵּנִי וַעֲנֵנִי. לְךָ אָמַר לִבִּי
בַּקְּשׁוּ פָנָי, אֶת פָּנֶיךָ יהוה אֲבַקֵּשׁ. אַל תַּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי, אַל תַּט בְּאַף
עַבְדֶּךָ, עֶזְרָתִי הָיִיתָ, אַל תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאַל תַּעַזְבֵנִי, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי. כִּי אָבִי וְאִמִּי
עֲזָבוּנִי, וַיהוה יַאַסְפֵנִי. הוֹרֵנִי יהוה דַּרְכֶּךָ, וּנְחֵנִי בְּאֹרַח מִישׁוֹר, לְמַעַן
שׁוֹרְרָי.

A LETTER TO THOSE WHO WAIT OUT THE WAR: Chava Allon Katz

When we're not drafted into service, uniformed and assigned
And yet feel in our inner beings the need to be counted
As part of the people;
We share longings and simple feelings we had thought we always knew:

In war there is no living, only enduring
In war there are no happenings, only clinging to front line events
In war there are no heroes, only those who act as they really must
In war the palette of meanings is black-and-white and choices depend only on primary rules – win or lose; survival or demise
In ware the crazy folks come out of hiding; feeling equal to all, as before judgment, they feel good. Everybody's on a jag. High and depressed.

In this war, I am Babi Yar's bent twig in April.
In this war, my children pee in their beds and write Am Ysrael Chai atop letters that have replaced good-night kisses.
In this war, there is no Neilah.
In this war, there are no wonders, only hard and sad persistence.

And we, who wait in our homes, eating in a sukkah daddy won't see; our blankets and food bundles by the door, ready for the shelter on a moment's siren; and yet who sleep in our own beds;
And you, who wait in a distant place, separated from us by the seas and oceans, not knowing the bundles, nor the darkness, and yet sharing our anxiety and sadness at the realness and sadness of it all,
And our soldiers on the fronts, poised and striking from the nest's edge perch – those soldiers playing backgammon and those idly waiting; and those under fire; and those about to be, again;

Are, in the different ways we dream and ache for Zion, inexorably linked.

PSALM 130

Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord.
Lord, hear my voice; let Your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.
If You, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who can stand?
But there is forgiveness with You, that You may be feared.
I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I hope.
My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning.
Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is loving kindness, and with Him is bountiful redemption.
And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

קל שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת, מִמַּעֲמַקִּים
קְרָאתִיךָ יהוה. אֲדֹנָי שִׁמְעָה
בְקוֹלִי, תִּהְיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קַשֻּׁבוֹת, לְקוֹל
תַּחֲנוּנָי. אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמָר יָהּ, אֲדֹנָי מִי
יַעֲמֹד. כִּי עִמְּךָ הַסְּלִיחָה, לְמַעַן תִּוָּרֵא.
קִוִּיתִי יהוה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי, וְלִדְבָרוֹ
הוֹחָלְתִּי. נַפְשִׁי לַאדֹנָי, מִשֹּׁמְרִים
לַבֹּקֶר, שֹׁמְרִים לַבֹּקֶר. יַחֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל
יהוה, כִּי עִם יהוה הַחֶסֶד, וְהַרְבֵּה עִמּוֹ
פְּדוּת. וְהוּא יִפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, מִכֹּל
עֲוֹנוֹתָיו.

מגש הכסף

אֵין מְדִינָה נִתֶּנֶת לְעַם
עַל מַגָּשׁ שֶׁל כֶּסֶף.

THE SILVER PLATTER

"No state is handed to a people
on a silver platter." *Chaim Weizmann*

... וְהָאָרֶץ תִּשְׁקֹט. עֵין שָׁמַיִם אוֹדֶמֶת
תְּעַמְעֵם לְאִטָּהּ עַל גְּבוּלוֹת עֲשֵׁנִים.
וְאֻמָּה תַּעֲמֹד –
קְרוּעַת לֵב אַךְ נוֹשֶׁמֶת –
לְקַבֵּל אֶת הַנֵּס הָאֶחָד אֵין שֵׁנִי.

הֵיא לַטֶּקֶס תִּכּוֹן,
הֵיא תָּקוּם לְמוּל סַהַר
וְעָמְדָה, טֶרֶם־יוֹם
עוֹטָה חַג וְאֵימָה.
– – אָז מִנֶּגֶד יֵצְאוּ נַעֲרָה וָנַעַר
וְאַט־אַט יִצְעֲדוּ הֵם
אֶל מוּל הָאֻמָּה.

לוֹבְשֵׁי חֹל וַחֲגוֹר וְכִבְדֵי נַעֲלַיִם,
בַּנֶּתִיב יַעֲלוּ הֵם הָלוֹךְ וְהַחֲרֵשׁ.
לֹא הֶחֱלִיפוּ בִגְדָם,
לֹא מָחוּ עוֹד בַּמַּיִם
אֶת עִקְבוֹת יוֹם הַפֶּרֶךְ
וְלֵיל קָו הָאֵשׁ.

עֲיֵפִים עַד בְּלִי קֵץ,
נְזִירִים מִמַּרְגּוֹעַ,
וְנוֹטְפִים טַלֵּי נְעוּרִים עִבְרִיִּים –

The earth grows still,
The lurid sky slowly pales over smoking borders.
Heartsick, but still living
a people stands by
To greet the uniqueness of the miracle.

Readied,
they wait beneath the moon,
Wrapped in awesome joy,
before the light.
— Then, soon, a girl and boy step forward.
And slowly walk
before the waiting nation;

In work garb and heavy-shod,
They climb in stillness
Wearing yet the dress of battle,
the grime
Of aching day
and fire-filled night

Unwashed, weary unto death
not knowing rest,
But wearing youth like dewdrops
in their hair.

דֹּם הַשְּׁנַיִם יִגְּשׁוּ וְעָמְדוּ לִבְלִי־נוֹעַ
וְאֵין אוֹת אִם חַיִּים הֵם אוֹ יְרוּיִם.

אָז תִּשְׁאַל הָאֻמָּה,
שְׁטוּפַת־דֶּמַע־וָקֶסֶם,
וְאָמְרָה: מִי אַתֶּם?
וְהַשְּׁנַיִם, שׁוֹקְטִים,
יַעֲנוּ לָהּ: אֲנַחְנוּ מַגַּשׁ הַכֶּסֶף
שֶׁעָלָיו לָךְ נִתְּנָה
מְדִינַת הַיְּהוּדִים.

כָּךְ יֹאמְרוּ.
וְנָפְלוּ לְרַגְלָהּ עוֹטְפֵי־צֵל
וְהַשְּׁאָר יִסָּפֵר בְּתוֹלְדוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל.

— Silently the two approach and stand.
Are they of the quick or of the dead?

Through wondering tears,
the people stare.
"Who are you,
the silent two?"
And they reply: "We are the Silver Platter
Upon which the Jewish State
was served to you."

And speaking, fall in shadow
at the nation's feet.
Let the rest in Israel's chronicles be told.

Natan Alterman

THE DIAMETER OF THE BOMB: Yehuda Amichai

translated by Chana Bloch

The diameter of the bomb was thirty centimeters
and the diameter of its effective range about seven meters;
with four dead and eleven wounded.
And around these, in a larger circle
of pain and time, two hospitals are scattered
and one graveyard. But the young woman
who was buried in the city she came from,
at a distance of more than a hundred kilometers,
enlarges the circle considerably,
and the solitary man mourning her death
at the distant shores of a country far across the sea
includes the entire world in the circle.
And I won't even mention the crying of orphans
that reaches up to the throne of God and
beyond, making
a circle with no end and no God.

קֹטֶר הַפְּצָצָה

קֹטֶר הַפְּצָצָה הָיָה שְׁלֹשִׁים סֶנְטִימֶטְרִים
וְקֹטֶר תְּחוּם פְּגִיעָתָהּ כְּשִׁבְעָה מֶטְרִים
וּבוֹ אַרְבָּעָה הֲרוּגִים וְאַחַד עָשָׂר פְּצוּעִים.
וּמְסָבִיב לָאֵלֶּה, בְּמַעְגָּל גָּדוֹל יוֹתֵר
שֶׁל כְּאֵב וּזְמַן, פְּזוּרִים שְׁנֵי בָּתֵּי חוֹלִים
וּבֵית קְבָרוֹת אֶחָד. אֲבָל הָאִשָּׁה
הַצְּעִירָה, שֶׁנִּקְבְּרָה בַּמָּקוֹם שֶׁמִּמֶּנּוּ
בָּאָה, בְּמֶרְחַק לְמַעְלָה מִמֵּאָה קִילוֹמֶטְרִים,
מַגְדִּילָה אֶת הַמַּעְגָּל מְאֹד מְאֹד,
וְהָאִישׁ הַבּוֹדֵד הַבּוֹכֶה עַל מוֹתָהּ
בִּירְכָתֵי אַחַת מִמְּדִינוֹת הַיָּם הָרְחוֹקוֹת,
מַכְלִיל בַּמַּעְגָּל אֶת כָּל הָעוֹלָם.
וְלֹא אַדַבֵּר כְּלָל עַל זַעֲקַת יְתוֹמִים
הַמַּגִּיעָה עַד לְכִסֵּא הָאֱלֹהִים
וּמִשָּׁם וְהָלְאָה וְעוֹשָׂה
אֶת הַמַּעְגָּל לְאֵין סוֹף וְאֵין אֱלֹהִים.

JERUSALEM: Jeff Schwaber

Jerusalem, at Yom Kippur, is a city for dreamers. I climb the walls and watch the sun set over the ancient city, heightening the magical golden splendor of the panorama. It is a sight that seems always new, yet thoroughly familiar.

Friday evening cloaks the golden city in white. Like Cinderella, Jerusalem races the clock, frantic in the face of impending transformation. The fury climaxes, and quickly the metamorphosis is apparent. Traffic disappears, horns top honking, cigarettes are extinguished, and throughout the streets, children and adults, women and men, look rested and peaceful.

I look at these people, study their faces, their eyes filled with pride in what they've accomplished, their cheeks stained with too many tears of grief over the price they've paid, their manner blending hope with anxiety as they look ahead.

As a boy, I knew the Western Wall as nothing more than an answer on my Bible quiz. But with its liberation in 1967, that enchanted structure tripped out of my textbook and into the grasp of hundreds of thousands of grateful dreamers, all united by fervent faith, in many cases fleeting, but in all cases sincere. There are no false tears at the Western Wall.

Background, family, education, social class, degree of religious faith – these things all blend into irrelevancy, as time imprints passion onto the faces of all who come here.

As I watch thousands make their way to the Wall, I hear Muslim prayers and Armenian chants, harmonizing with the melodies of the Shofar, and I am reminded of the dream of this city, a dream not always tangible, but always accorded the privilege of plausibility. History strengthens a fervent faith in the future – a faith which defied newsprint, scorns politics, and dodges bullets in its quest to turn the dream of this golden city and its New Year into a reality of a better world.

AN ARAB SHEPHERD IS SEARCHING FOR HIS GOAT ON MOUNT ZION: Yehuda Amichai

translated by Chana Bloch

An Arab shepherd is searching for his goat on Mount Zion
and on the opposite mountain I am searching
for my little boy.
An Arab shepherd and a Jewish father
both in their temporary failure.
Our voices meet
above the Sultan's Pool in the valley between us.
Neither of us wants
the child or the goat to get caught in the wheels
of the terrible *Had Gadya* machine.

Afterward we found them among the bushes
and our voices came back inside us, laughing and crying.

Searching for a goat or a son
has always been the beginning
of a new religion in these mountains.

רוֹעֶה עַרְבִי מְחַפֵּשׂ גְּדִי בְּהַר צִיּוֹן

רוֹעֶה עַרְבִי מְחַפֵּשׂ גְּדִי בְּהַר צִיּוֹן,
וּבָהָר מְמוּל אֲנִי מְחַפֵּשׂ אֶת בְּנִי הַקָּטָן.
רוֹעֶה עַרְבִי וְאָב יְהוּדִי
בְּכִשְׁלוֹנָם הַזְּמַנִּי.
קוֹלוֹת שְׁנֵינוּ נִפְגָּשִׁים מֵעַל
לִבְרֵכַת הַשִּׁלְטָן בָּעֵמֶק בָּאֶמְצַע.
שְׁנֵינוּ רוֹצִים שֶׁלֹּא יִכָּנְסוּ
הַבֵּן וְהַגְּדִי לְתוֹךְ תַּהֲלִיךְ
הַמְּכוֹנָה הַנּוֹרָאָה שֶׁל חַד גַּדְיָא.

אַחַר־כָּךְ מָצָאנוּ אוֹתָם בֵּין הַשִּׂיחִים,
וְקוֹלוֹתֵינוּ חָזְרוּ אֵלֵינוּ וּבָכוּ וְצָחֲקוּ בְּפָנִים.

הַחִפּוּשִׂים אַחַר גְּדִי אוֹ אַחַר בֵּן
הָיוּ תָּמִיד
הַתְחָלַת דֶּת חֲדָשָׁה בֶּהָרִים הָאֵלֶּה.

BY THIRTEEN-YEAR-OLD TALI SOREK
FROM BEERSHEBA, ISRAEL

I had a box of colors –
Shining, bright and bold.
I had a box of colors,
Some war, some very cold.

I had no red for the blood of wounds.
I had no black for the orphans' grief.
I had no white for the dead faces and hands.
I had no yellow for burning sands.

But I had orange for the joy of life,
And I had green for buds and nests.
I had blue for bright, clear skies.
I had pink for dreams and rest.

I sat down and painted Peace.

IF I FORGET THEE, JERUSALEM: Yehuda Amichai

If I forget thee, Jerusalem,
Then let my right be forgotten.
Let my right be forgotten, and my left remember.
Let my left remember, and your right close
And your mouth open near the gate.

I shall remember Jerusalem
And forget the forest – my love will remember,
Will open her hair, will close my window,
Will forget my right,
Will forget my left.

If the west wind does not come
I'll never forgive the walls,
Or the sea, or myself.
Should my right forget,
My left shall forgive,
I shall forget all water,
I shall forget my mother.

אִם אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ, יְרוּשָׁלַיִם

אִם אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ, יְרוּשָׁלַיִם,
תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי.
תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי, תִּזְכֹּר שְׂמֹאלִי,
תִּזְכֹּר שְׂמֹאלִי, תִּסְגֹּר יְמִינֵךְ,
יִפָּתַח פִּיךְ לְיַד הַשַּׁעַר.

אֶזְכֹּר אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם,
אֶשְׁכַּח אֶת הַיַּעַר. תִּזְכֹּר אֲהוּבָתִי,
תִּפְתַּח שַׁעְרָה, תִּסְגֹּר אֶת חַלּוֹנִי,
תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי,
תִּשְׁכַּח שְׂמֹאלִי.

אִם רוּחַ מַעֲרָב לֹא תָּבוֹא, לֹא אֶמְחַל לַחוֹמוֹת,
לֹא אֶסְלַח לַיָּם, לֹא אֶסְלַח לְעַצְמִי.
תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי
תִּסְלַח שְׂמֹאלִי,
אֶשְׁכַּח כָּל מַיִם.
אֶשְׁכַּח אֶת אִמִּי.

JERUSALEM OF GOD: Naomi Shemer

The olive trees that stand in silence
Upon the hills of time
To hear the voices of the city
As bells of evening chime.
The Shofar sounding from the temple.
To call the world to prayer,
The shepherd pauses in the valley
And peace is everywhere.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem
Forever young, yet forever old,
My heart will sing your songs of glory.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Oh, city with a heart of gold,
My heart will sing your songs of glory,
Jerusalem.

The water well for those who thirsted,
The ancient market square,
Your golden sun that lights the future
For all men everywhere.
How many songs, How many stories,
The stony hills recall.
Around her heart my city carries
A lonely ancient wall.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Forever young, yet forever old,
My heart will sing your songs of glory.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Oh, city with a heart of gold,
My heart will sing your songs of glory,
Jerusalem.

And far away beyond the desert
A thousand suns will glow.
We shall be going to Jordan,
By way of Jericho.
My simple voice cannot acclaim the,
Too weak the words I choose,
Jerusalem, If I forget thee,
May my right hand its cunning lose.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Forever young, yet forever old,
My heart will sing your songs of glory.
Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Jerusalem,
Oh, city with a heart of gold,
My heart will sing your songs of glory,
Jerusalem.

A PRAYER FOR WORLD PEACE
adapted from Rabbi Nachman of Bratislav

May it be Your will

that there be an end to war and to the shedding of blood in this world,

and that a deep and genuine peace pervade this world,

and that nation not have to lift up sword against nation in this world,

and that human beings no longer have to learn war.

Instead may all those who live on this planet

realize and comprehend that we have not come into this world

in order to quarrel or to hate or to envy or to compete or to kill,

but that we have come into this world to live and to labor and to love.