

Yom Ha-Shoah Holocaust Remembrance Service

Lighting of the Candles

Reader 1

We light six candles
In Memory of the light
of six million people,
Extinguished in the Holocaust.

Reader 2

We gather today
To remember the time of horror,
To mourn our dead,
To reflect on the innocence and courage of the martyrs.

Reader 3

And we reassert our commitment to a world
Where all people will live together
In peace and justice
With kindness, compassion, and charity,
With mercy and love.

Opening song: HEE-NAY MA TOV

Hee-nay ma tov oo-ma na-yeem
She-vet a-kheem gam ya-khad.

Remembrance

Read together

As we commemorate the deaths of our six million brothers and sisters, we honor and remember all of the murdered--Jews and gentiles--victims, martyrs, heroes.

Reader 4

We honor those who died because they were Jews.
We honor those who died because they helped Jews.
Those who died because they resisted the Nazis.
Those who died because of their ideas and convictions.
Those who died simply because the death machine became so huge, so embracing, so arbitrary.

Reader 1

Who were the soldiers in this one-sided war against our existence on earth?
What was on their minds, what was in their hearts, day after day, week after week, year after year, as they carried out their grim mission?

Reader 2

Few recognized the differences at first--even when evidence was presented and eyewitnesses came forward.

Read together

No one wanted to believe it.
Not Christian, not Jew.

For who can confront the terrible reality of murder without hatred,
murder without blame or guilt,
murder as government policy,
murder as duty.

Reader 3

But there are survivors of the Holocaust.
We know them.
They are the parents whose children are gone,
and they are the children without parents.

Reader 4

We know them.
They are the remnants--no brothers, no sisters,
no aunts and uncles, no grandparents, no cousins, no neighbors, no friends.

Read together

We know them, the survivors,
because they are part of us,
they belong to us.
We are all survivors--all members of a single family, haunted by our shared memories.
We are all Jews.
We mourn together the lost potential of our youth, the dignity of our martyrs--
the murder of innocents.

Mourning of Our Dead

Reader 4

For my days are consumed like smoke
And my bones are burned as at a hearth.
My heart is smitten like grass and withered For I forget to eat my bread
By reason of the voice of my sighing.
I am like a pelican of the wilderness.
I have become as an owl of the waste places.
I watch and have become like a sparrow
That is alone in the housetop.
My enemies taunt me all the day.
They that are against me do curse me
For I have eaten ashes like bread
And mingled my drink with my weeping.
My days are like a vanishing shadow
And I am withered like grass.

Psalm 102

Read together

With trembling hands I gather the remnants of half-a-million Jews.

[Adapted as poetry by Harold Black, 1980, from passages in *Ashes and Fire* by Jacob Pat]

Reader 1

Let us all stand
for a moment of silent meditation.

Reader 2

I see the world
gradually being turned into a wilderness.
I hear the approaching thunder, which will destroy us too.
I can feel the sufferings of millions.

Reader 3

And yet, if I look up into the heavens,
I think it will all come right,
that this cruelty, too will end.
And that peace and tranquility will return again.

Anne Frank

Humanist Mourner's Kaddish***Read together***

Magnified is the glory of the departed
In a world they tried to make better for us all.

May their glory be eternally praised
Hallowed and extolled, lauded and exulted Honored and revered
Adored and admired
Beyond all songs and hymns of exaltation
Beyond all praise that humankind can utter.
May it be so.

Let there be abundant peace on earth
and life's goodness for humankind.
May it be so.

May there be peace for all Israel.
Amen.

Adapted from the traditional Mourners' Kaddish by Harold Black

Extinguishing the Candles**Reader 4**

We darken six candles
In memory of six million Jews
Extinguished in the Holocaust.

Closing Song: Oseh Shalom