

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

**I**n Western European countries and in America, it has become the custom to mark the setting of the tombstone with a service. In America, the tombstone or marker is covered with a cloth which is removed by the family during the service, so the ritual is called the “unveiling.”

The unveiling usually takes place near the first yahrzeit, or twelve months after the death, but it may take place as soon as thirty days after the death or after the twelve-month mark. While there is no

traditional basis for this service, except for the custom of visiting the grave on the day of the yahrzeit, it has become an accepted practice, offering the family an additional opportunity to pay tribute to their loved one together.

The ceremony does not require the presence of a rabbi or cantor; a family member or friend may lead the service in Hebrew or in English. There is no set liturgy for an unveiling. You can follow the service in this booklet, or you can substitute or add other psalms, poems, or readings as well as personal reflections or reminiscences.



PARK AVENUE SYNAGOGUE

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

• Begin the service with one or more of the following readings, in Hebrew or English or with other psalms, poems, or readings that you have chosen.

## PSALM 23

**מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד** A Psalm of David.  
**ה' רָעִי לֹא אֶחְסָר :** Adonai is my shepherd;  
**בְּנִאוֹת דָּשָׁא יִרְבִּיצֵנִי** I shall not want.  
**עַל־מֵי מְנוּחוֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי :** God makes me lie down in  
**נִפְשִׁי יִשׁוּבֵב** green pastures.  
**יִנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְלֵי־צֶדֶק לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ :** God leads me beside the still  
**גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶךְ בְּגִיא צִלְמוֹת** waters.  
**לֹא־אִירָא רָע כִּי־אַתָּה עִמָּדִי** God restores my soul.  
**שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעֶנְתְּךָ הֵמָּה יִנְחֲמֵנִי :** God leads me in the paths of  
**תַּעֲרֶךְ לִפְנֵי שְׁלֹחַן נֹגֵד צָרִי** righteousness  
**דִּשְׁנֵת בְּשֶׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי** for God's name's sake.  
**כּוֹסִי רוֹיֵה :** Though I walk through the  
**אֵן טוֹב וְחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי** valley of the shadow of Death,  
**כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי** I will fear no evil: for You are  
**וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־ה'** with me;  
**לְאָרְךָ יָמִים :** Your rod and Your staff, they  
 comfort me.  
 You prepare a table before me  
 in the presence of my  
 enemies.  
 You anoint my head with oil;  
 my cup overflows.  
 Surely goodness and mercy  
 shall follow me all the days of  
 my life,  
 and I will dwell in the house of  
 Adonai forever.

## PSALM 121

**שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת** A song for ascents.  
**אֲשָׁא עֵינַי אֶל־הָהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי :** I turn my eyes to the  
**עֲזָרִי מֵעַם ה' עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ :** mountains; from where will  
**אֶל־יְיָ לְמוֹט רַגְלֶךָ אֶל־יְנוּם שְׁמֶרְךָ :** my help come?  
**הִנֵּה לֹא־יְנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל :** My help comes from  
**ה' שְׁמֶרְךָ ה' צִלְךָ עַל־יַד יְמִינוֹךָ :** Adonai, maker of heaven  
**יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא־יִכָּפֶה וַיְרַח בַּלַּיְלָה :** and earth.  
**ה' יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל־רָע יִשְׁמַר אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ :** God will not let your foot  
**ה' יִשְׁמַר־צִאתְךָ וּבּוֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד־עוֹלָם :** give way; your guardian  
 will not slumber;  
 See, the guardian of Israel  
 neither slumbers nor  
 sleeps!  
 Adonai is your guardian,  
 Adonai is your protection  
 at your right hand.  
 By day the sun will not  
 strike you, nor the moon  
 by night.  
 Adonai will guard you from  
 all harm; God will guard  
 your life.  
 Adonai will guard your  
 going and coming now and  
 forever.



# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

## A LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

by Rabbi Sylvan Kamens and 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.

---

“A Litany of Remembrance” by Rabbi Sylvan Kamens and Rabbi Jack Reimer from *Gates of Prayer: A New Union Prayerbook*, copyright (c) 1975 by the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Used by permission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. All rights reserved. Not to be distributed, sold or copied without express written permission.

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

- Remove the cloth and read what is written on the marker out loud. Then continue the service:

In the name of the family of \_\_\_\_\_ and in the presence of his/her family (and friends), we consecrate this marker to his/her memory, as a token of our love and respect.

## FOR A MAN

תְּהִי נִשְׁמָתוֹ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים. אָמֵן.

*T'hi nishmato tz'rurah bitzror ha-hayim. Amen.*

May his soul be bound up in the bond of life. **Amen.**

## FOR A WOMAN

תְּהִי נִשְׁמָתָהּ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים. אָמֵן.

*T'hi nishmatah tz'rurah bitzror ha-hayim. Amen.*

May her soul be bound up in the bond of life. **Amen.**

Almighty God, eternal Creator, we are thankful for the life of \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
for the years which he/she was granted, and for the privilege of having shared those years.

May the memory of his/her \_\_\_\_\_ [mention characteristics like:]

- |                                |             |           |                              |                          |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Devotion to family & friends | • Integrity | • Courage | • Dedication to his/her work | • Intellectual curiosity |
| • Thoughtfulness               | • Patience  | • Loyalty | • Sense of humor             | • Love of nature         |

continue to inspire us, so that we may live better lives. O Adonai, help us all honor \_\_\_\_\_'s memory through our daily lives. Comfort us, and grant us strength, for You are our Rock and Redeemer. **Amen.**

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

• If you wish, invite family members and friends to share reflections. They may like to talk about their experience of mourning or share a memory of the person whose marker is being unveiled. These reflections are optional and the service is still complete without personal reflections. After this time for sharing, continue the service:

**הַרֹפֵא לִשְׁבוּרֵי לֵב וּמַחְבֵּשׁ לְעֵצְבוֹתָם:**

*Ha-rofeh li-shvurei leiv u-m'habeish l'atzvotam.*

Adonai heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.

*Psalm 147:3*

Almighty God, Master of mercy, whose compassion endures forever, let neither death nor sorrow have dominion over us. Grant comfort, strength and consolation to those who mourn \_\_\_\_\_, as it is written: "Adonai shall be your enduring light, and the days of your mourning shall come to an end."

Bless this family with love and peace, that they may serve You with a perfect heart.

Accept our act of devotion, Adonai, as we consecrate this monument to the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ with love and respect.

## FOR A MAN

**תְּהִי נִשְׁמָתוֹ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים. אָמֵן.**

*T'hi nishmato tz'rurah bitzror ha-hayim. Amen.*

May his soul be bound up in the bond of life. **Amen.**

## FOR A WOMAN

**תְּהִי נִשְׁמָתָהּ צְרוּרָה בְּצִרוֹר הַחַיִּים. אָמֵן.**

*T'hi nishmatah tz'rurah bitzror ha-hayim. Amen.*

May her soul be bound up in the bond of life. **Amen.**

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

- Recite the following prayer in Hebrew and/or English:

## FOR A MAN

אל מלא רחמים שוכן במרומים,  
המצא מנוחה נכונה על כנפי השכינה,  
במעלות קדושים וטהורים  
כזהר הרקיע מזהירים  
את נשמת \_\_\_\_\_ בן \_\_\_\_\_!  
שהלך לעולמו,  
בגן עדן תהא מנוחתו.  
אנא, בעל הרחמים, הסתירהו  
בסתר כנפיק לעולמים,  
וצרור בצרור החיים את נשמתו.  
ה' הוא נחלתו וינוח בשלום על משכבו.  
ונאמר אמן.

## FOR A WOMAN

אל מלא רחמים שוכן במרומים,  
המצא מנוחה נכונה על כנפי השכינה,  
במעלות קדושים וטהורים  
כזהר הרקיע מזהירים  
את נשמת \_\_\_\_\_ בת \_\_\_\_\_!  
שהלך לעולמה,  
בגן עדן תהא מנוחתה,  
אנא, בעל הרחמים, הסתירה  
בסתר כנפיק לעולמים,  
וצרור בצרור החיים את נשמתה.  
ה' הוא נחלתה ותנוח בשלום על משכבה.  
ונאמר אמן.

*El maleh rahamim,*  
O God, exalted and full of compassion,  
grant perfect peace in Your sheltering Presence,  
among the holy and pure, to the soul of

who has gone to his/her eternal home.  
Master of mercy, we beseech You,  
remember all the worthy and righteous deeds  
that he/she performed in the land of the living.  
May his/her soul be bound up in the bond of life.  
Adonai is his/her portion.  
May he/she rest in peace.  
Let us say: **Amen.**

# Unveiling Service הקמת מצבה

• If there is no minyan (ten Jews over the age of bar/bat mitzvah), the service ends here. If a minyan is present, conclude the service with the Mourner's Kaddish:

## MOURNERS

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'meih raba  
b'alma di v'ra kiruteih,  
v'yamlikh malkhuteih,  
b'haveikhon u-v'yomeikhon  
u-v'havei d'khol beit yisrael,  
ba-agala u-vizman kariv, v'imru amen.

## ALL TOGETHER

Y'hei sh'meih raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almei almaya.

## MOURNERS

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah, v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam, v'yitnasei, v'yit-  
hadar v'yitaleh v'yit-halal sh'meih d'kudsha, b'rikh hu, l'eila min  
kol birkhata v'shirata, tushb'hata v'nehamata da-amiran b'alma,  
v'imru **amen**.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'hayim aleinu v'al kol yisrael,  
v'imru **amen**.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael,  
v'imru **amen**.

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.  
בְּעֶלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרֻעוּתֵהּ,  
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ  
בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן  
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּעִגְלָא וּבְזִמָּן קָרִיב, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלָם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא  
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא. בְּרִיךְ הוּא,  
לְעֵלָא מִן כָּל בְּרִכְתָּא וְשִׁירָתָא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמָתָא,  
דְאָמְרִין בְּעֶלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שָׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

עוֹשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֵמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ  
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.

• Some people have the custom to ritually wash their hands as they leave the cemetery.





© MMXXVI