

9 Sivan, 5764 (May 29, 2004) Yizkor Shavuot J. M. Terrett

Today is the second day of Shavuot, according to the Sadducaic, or priestly reckoning. Therefore, today we will observe an historical practice along with other communities of Jewish people around the world: Yizkor. We selected the Sadducaic reckoning because it falls on a Shabbat, and we want to be flexible in our observance of the temporal imperative of festival observances.

We have counted fifty days since the Feast of First Fruits and we have come together to celebrate three things: The second Grain Harvest (wheat), the giving of the Law at Sinai and the descent of the Spirit (Ruach HaChodesh) after the ascension of our L-rd.

At Pesach, we celebrate our deliverance, both from Egypt and from the Egypt of this world. At Shavuot we celebrate our passage from spiritual childhood to spiritual maturity – sort of a generational community Bar/Bat Mitzvah slash Confirmation.

Not only does He provide us with the material means to live and prosper as we dwell in His promises, but He doubly empowers us to shine as a beacon for the great task which His people must continue to fulfill, before that great and awesome Day of His return: the Great Commission (Isaiah 43:10-13; Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19, 20).

He sent His Word, so we could know how to walk with Him and allow the two-edged sword of His truth to kasher the depths of our lives, individually and corporately, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. He also sent His Spirit to perform a function He promised to His people once in the wilderness, and once when David prepared to build the temple: He will one day come and dwell in our midst, not in a golden box, nor in a golden building, but in the fleshly temple of each believer's heart (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

Therefore let us strive to glorify our indwelling King and allow nothing to defile the temple of our flesh, for we have been bought at a Great Price (I Cor. 7:23). We can groan, yes (2 Cor. 5:1-10), but we must neither destroy, nor defile what the L-rd has cleansed (Acts 10:15; Col. 19, 20). Let us proceed to the Yizkor.

In traditional Judaism, there are four times each calendar year where our beloved departed are remembered: Pesach (Passover), Shavuot (Pentecost), Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and Sukkoth (Tabernacles). On the Hebrew lunar calendar, this is the second Yizkor of the sacred year, and the one where we are going to be performing a special act of remembrance for a very special person: Ava Georgia Simmons.

Let us join hands with all previous generations of believers from Abel and Noah and Abraham, David, Elijah, John who was called the Baptist and the Apostles of our Resurrected L-rd. By the chanting of Kaddish we acknowledge that our brief lives are only one more chapter in a greater saga, in the Love Song of the Ages. May the Holy One, His Anointed Messiah and the breath of His Spirit grant us comfort and healing as we reach back and touch those through whom Adam's blood came down to us – and which shall flow through us to our children's children till that Great Day of His Return.

**Maranatha.** Even so, Yeshua, adonaynoo, Lech (Jesus, our L-rd, come). May His peace and comfort be the shelter where our souls find their rest as we remember. Amen.