

Rabbi Beth H Klafter  
Rosh HaShana 5777  
October 3, 2016

### **In Memory of Shimon Peres and in Honor of Israel**

I would take a moment now to honor the memory of Shimon Peres, former president and Prime Minister of Israel, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for the Oslo Accords, truly the last of the “*dor gadol*,” the great generation of the dreamers and the builders of our beloved State of Israel.

Our Jewish tradition teaches that the truly righteous do not need monuments of stone. Their words and their lives are their monuments. And so in honoring his memory we affirm our commitment to Israel on this morning of the New Year.

As with any leader, not everyone agreed with the politics of Shimon Peres all the time. Yet we can all admire and emulate his faith in Zionism and his boundless efforts in the pursuit of peace. He was an insightful and brilliant visionary, dedicating himself to pluralism and progress. And his passion and optimism for the land and the people of Israel defined his seven-decade career and his life journey.

We can learn much from his own words when he said, “The message of the Jewish people is that faith and moral vision can triumph over all adversity.”

Shimon Peres didn’t live to see peace in the Middle East. He embodied *tikvah*, hope. We will honor his memory when we work to see freedom and justice. And we will honor the memory of Shimon Peres each day that we pray for peace and work for peace and security in Israel.

At his funeral last week in Jerusalem, his daughter, Tzvia Walden, described her father, “As a man in love. In love with his family. In love with the people of Israel. In love with the state of Israel. In love with the days that he may see good. And in love with the future to come.”

*Zecher Tzaddik L’ivracha*, May the memory of this righteous man be a blessing and may his life continue to inspire and sustain us and our brothers and sisters in Israel in the days, and the year and decades to come. Amen.