

"Untitled" by Rabbi Jared H. Saks

The Psalmist asks:

"How long, O Adonai; will you ignore me forever?

How long will You hide Your face from me?

How long will I have cares on my mind,

Grief in my heart all day?

How long will my enemy have the upper hand?" [1]

And the Psalmist answers:

"Even when I walk through the valley of deep darkness,

I fear no harm, for You are with me.

Your rod and Your staff, they reassure me." [2]

But the Psalmist is wrong.

God's face isn't hidden.

And we need not wait for God to act.

For God has already acted by creating us

Each of us *b'tzelem Elohim*, in God's image.

We are God's presence in the world.

When we cease hiding our faces, God's face goes unhidden.

When we spread a table, even in the presence of our enemies,

All of our cups overflow.

Judaism affords us the stages of grief.

Shiva. A week.

Sh'loshim. A month

Yahrzeit. Each year.

Yizkor. We always remember.

But Judaism also calls us to act.

Today we grieve,

But soon, we must return to our lives.

And we are called to live our lives

In ways that honor those who have come before us

Those whose used the gifts of their lives to improve the lives of others

And those whose lives became *kiddush Hashem*, a sanctification of the Divine name.

Let our grief galvanize us.

Let our mourning motivate us.

Let our tears turn our hearts toward others.

Let our weeping make us wise

To elect leaders who actually care about our lives.

Only then can we say *zichronam livrach*,

That their memories will be a blessing.

[1] Psalm 13:2-3

[2] Psalm 23:4