



TEMPLE
EMANUEL

Yahrzeit at Home

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It is customary to kindle a light on the eve of the Yahrzeit which is kept burning for twenty-four hours. This practice is linked with the thought expressed in Proverbs 20:27, "The spirit of a person is the lamp of the Lord."

There is no traditional blessing associated with this lighting, however one may recite the following prayer, Psalm 23 or another prayer of one's own choosing or composition. Or one may light the candle in silence.

God, I am to kindle the Yahrzeit light in memory of _____.
I am grateful for those who are alive this day and those whose souls are bound up in the bond of eternal life, those through whom my life has been enriched. I pray that I may demonstrate my gratefulness to them by acts of loving-kindness. I give thanks for the years of life _____ did enjoy, for the companionship shared with him/her, for his/her gifts of hand and heart and mind which helped bring others happiness, for these and more which will endure in the tenderness of memory and as a hallowing influence.

Help me, God, to make memory into blessing. While accepting the inevitability of death, and affirming the possibility of an afterlife, help me be inspired by the memory to live today and every day with greater compassion, honesty, consecrating purpose, and gratitude.

After the kindling one may say:

(If departed was male) "Zich-ro-no liv-ra-chah."

(If departed was female) "Zich-ronah liv-rachah."

"May his/her memory be for a blessing."

– Rabbi Daniel Alexander, based on a prayer by Rabbi David J. Nesson