

YIZKOR

The memory of a friend or family  
my mother my father my grandmother my grandfather  
the memory of my birth right  
my parents  
my childhood home  
my first school  
the library,

I remember.

The memory of my parents  
their old age  
my mom my dad  
a vacation in the summer  
a lunch at the beach  
the card games  
their friends at dinner  
the way they laughed  
they way they cried  
when their parents died  
the memory of our house.

The memories  
of their parents  
immigrants  
the shop in the city  
the goldene medinah  
school a job  
a home  
children.

I remember the memories of my parents  
of their parents  
I remember.

Blot in the memory  
let it be fixed  
unmistakeable  
I remember  
the memories of my great grandparents  
crouching in a corner of a cold room  
in Ukraine  
Minsk  
Byelorusse  
Vilna  
in Salonika  
Casablanca  
Kiev  
Kishinev  
I remember them  
hiding their children  
in a cellar  
my ancestors  
praying for the lives of their children  
a broken leaf of a table for study

the candle light  
the holy books  
the holy intent of our lives.

While they howled in the street  
we sat huddled together for warmth around a fire  
reading our holy books and  
teaching our children.  
In a world without sense we made sense.

I remember, I remember it all.

Rabbi James Stone Goodman  
Congregation Neve Shalom  
St. Louis  
[www.neveshalom.org](http://www.neveshalom.org)  
[www.stonegoodman.com](http://www.stonegoodman.com)