Blessed is he who teaches music to his children.

A man who weeps over the increase of his children's tears.

Send to Gilead, three hundred sheaves of wheat, Cross your hills and traverse green.

Gain of your children's friends, of your children's friends.

More than they could imagine.

I have given my heart to my Children.

I have given my heart to my Children.

I have given my heart to my Children.

I have given my heart to my Children.

I have given my heart to my Children.

I have given my heart to my Children.
Problem: Leave the sunshine in each temple.
Could these blind eyes reach the light and the warmth of your presence?
When were you to walk
by your brink of light
and bear the burdens of your pains?
Reach for your lamp, sit there, I see
Anchored in your friend, who still recalls your voice.
From hill to hill
your tracks, your tracks, your tracks, your tracks, your tracks, your tracks
Your, wherever they may be, lowest your gaze.
I saw for you from there, the city.
But alas! Your description, wage for your blessings.
Your friends who are as joy when you have peace—
As your friends lead bound their souls to you
with love and grace.
Jesu, our merciful! You find your path
is such the deer.
In which of Oves, the river
is your present sway.
To contemplate the face of Oves
Long enough here and been filled with zeal.
Count me among the dead, now me be!
Where I see my friends, the eight
Your lips in their earth
What wawing dogs dear, wear
What pleasure can I find from food and drink
In much, much land.
Sure the skies by which tis deemed your passions
In the hearth of the room
Your friends in your chamber
now hidden.
When once your country-burdened was
On the bridge that's gone, a ample, a
Under your mother's counseled
Your friends from your meals from your soul
Your al—whence the spell of fail

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LONG
when you were young

when you return to what you were

reflections in your joy

who lives is seen dear to you in bliss,

the new dawn breaks over you,

who wails and loves is seen in your midst,

who makes his home within your course,

Happy the one he chooses to bless near,

Cord dessa to dwell in you:

Your greatness will endure, your crown is everlasting.

The crown of the unforgotten kingdom will enrich, enhance.

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BURIAL KADDISH

The text of the following form of the Kaddish prayer is recited upon the completion of the burial service for an individual. In an expanded form, this Kaddish is also recited at a siyyum, a celebration that follows the completion of studying a tractate of Talmud.

Exalted and sanctified be God's great Name in the world which He is to create anew in the future, when He will revive the dead and bring them to life everlasting. He will rebuild the city of Jerusalem and restore the Temple in its midst, uproot idolatry from the Land and restore the worship of Heaven to its site.*

*The recitation of the Kaddish continues here with the usual text
RABBINIC SOURCES ON ISRAEL & JERUSALEM

{1} The Land of Israel is the center of the world. Jerusalem is the center of the Land of Israel. The Temple is the center of Jerusalem. The Temple Hall [heikhal] is the center of the Temple. The Ark is the center of the Temple Hall. The rock of the foundation is in front of the Ark, and upon it the entire world is founded.

--Tanhuma, Kedoshim 10

{2} Outside the Land of Israel those who pray should direct their hearts toward the Land of Israel, as it is said: "and pray in the direction of their land." (2 Chronicles 6:38). In the Land of Israel those who pray should direct their hearts toward Jerusalem, as it is said: "and they pray to You in the direction of the city You have chosen" (2 Chronicles 6:34). In Jerusalem those who pray should direct their hearts toward the Holy Temple, as it is said: "if he comes to pray toward this House" (2 Chronicles 6:32). In the Holy Temple those who pray should direct their hearts toward the Holy of Holies, as it is said: "the supplications which Your servant Your people offer toward this place" (1 Kings 8:30). Those in the north face the south, those in the south face the north, those in the east face the west, and those in the west face the east so that all Israel prays toward one place.

--Tosefta Brachot 3:16

{3} "The place You made Your abode, O Lord, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands established" (Exodus 15:17). Jerusalem is directly above, opposite earthly Jerusalem. It was because of the great love [God] has for earthly Jerusalem that He created another in heaven, as it is said: "See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands, your walls are ever before Me" (Isaiah 49:16).

--Tanhum, Pekudei 1

{4} A man may compel his entire household to go with him to the Land of Israel, but none may be forced to leave it. They may be compelled to go up to Jerusalem, but none may be forced to leave it. Our rabbis taught: If a husband wishes to go up [to the Land of Israel or Jerusalem] and his wife refuses, she may be pressed to do so, but if she does not go up she may be divorced without [being paid from her ketubah]. If a wife wishes to go up and he does not, he may be pressed to do so, and if he does not he must divorce her and pay her ketubah.

--Ketubot 110b

{5} Rabbi Jeremiah bar Abba in the name of Rabbi Yoḥanan said: "And the spirit to them that walks therein" (Isaiah 42:5) teaches that anyone who walks even as few as four cubits in the Land of Israel is assured a place in the world-to-come.

--Ketubot 111a
{6} Rabbi Simlai expounded: Why did Moses our teacher long to enter the Land of Israel? Are we to suppose that what he needed was to eat its fruit or be sated with its bounty? Rather, what Moses had in mind was that many mitzvot given to Israel could only be fulfilled in the Land of Israel.

--Sotah 14a

{7} "Oh, that I had wings like a dove" (Psalm 55:7). Why like a dove? Said Rabbi Azariah in the name of Rabbi Yudan: Because all other birds rest on a rock or on a tree when tired, but when a dove is tired, she draws in one of her wings, yet continues to fly. "Since I will have to keep moving farther and farther away" (Psalm 55:8) -- moving and moving on again, from exile to exile -- "I would rather lodge in the wilderness" (ibid.). [In other words], I would rather dwell in the wilderness of the Land of Israel than in palaces outside the Land.

--Genesis Rabbah 39:8

{8} Ten measures of beauty came down to the world -- Jerusalem took nine, and all the rest of the world one.

--Kiddushin 49b

{9} Ten portions of suffering are in the world -- nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world; Ten portions of physical strength are in the world -- nine in Judea, and one in the rest of the world. Ten portions of wisdom are in the world -- nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world. Ten portions of hypocrisy are in the world -- nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world. Ten portions of Torah are in the world -- nine in Jerusalem, and one in the rest of the world.

--Avot d'Rabbi Natan 48

{10} Rabbi Joshua ben Levi said: "Jerusalem, you are built as a city compact together" (Psalm 122:3) -- a city that makes all Israel feel the fellowship that bind them together.

--Jerusalem Talmud, Hagigah 3:6

{11} Rabbi Shimon ben Yohai taught: The Holy One gave Israel three precious gifts, each of them through suffering: Torah, the Land of Israel, and the world-to-come. The proof for Torah? "Happy is the one whom You chasten, O Lord, for thus You teach him Your Torah" (Psalm 94:12). The proof for the Land of Israel? "As one chastens his child, so the Lord your God chastens you" (Deuteronomy 8:5), which is followed by, "The Lord your God brings you into the good Land" (Deuteronomy 8:7). And the world-to-come? "The commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light, and reproofs of suffering are the way to life" [i.e., in the next world] (Proverbs 6:23).

--Berakhot 5a
When a person purchases a house in the Land of Israel, the bill of sale for it may be written even on the Sabbath.

--Babba Kamma 80b

In the future the Holy One will turn the ninth of Av into a time of rejoicing, as it is said: "Thus said the Lord of hosts -- the fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth month, the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month shall become occasions for joy and gladness, happy festivals for the House of Israel" (Zechariah 8:19). God Himself will rebuild Jerusalem and gather the exiles of Israel within it, as it is said: "The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem; He gathers the exiles of Israel" (Psalm 147:2). Rabbi Yohanan said: Whoever mourns for Jerusalem will merit seeing it at its time of rejoicing, as it is written, "Rejoice for Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her! Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her" (Isaiah 66:10). But whoever did not mourn for Jerusalem will not see it at its time of rejoicing.

--Yalkut Shimoni, Lamentations 998

When a person plasters his house, he should leave a small space unfinished in remembrance of Jerusalem. When a woman adorns herself with jewels, she should leave something off in remembrance of Jerusalem, as it is said: "If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand lose its cunning" (Psalm 137:5)

--Midrash Tehillim on Psalm 137

One who sees the cities of Judah in their ruined state recites the verse, "Your holy cities have become a desert; Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem a desolation" (Isaiah 64:9), and then tears his garment. One who sees Jerusalem in its ruined state recites the verse, "Our Holy Temple, our pride, where our ancestors praised You, has been consumed by fire; all that was dear to us is ruined" (Isaiah 64:10), and then tears his garment. As soon as he reaches Mount Scopus he tears his garment; he tears it separately for the Temple and separately for Jerusalem.

--Moed Katan 26a

Great is peace, for the Holy One will announce the redemption of Jerusalem only with peace, as it is said: "How welcome on the mountain are the footsteps of the herald announcing peace...telling Zion, 'Your God is King!'" (Isaiah 52:7).

--Deuteronomy Rabbah 5:15
Prayer for Jerusalem

Saadiah Gaon (c. 922–942)

Have mercy, O Lord our God, upon Israel Your people
Upon Jerusalem, Your city
Upon Zion, the dwelling place of Your Glory
And upon the destroyed, mournful, and desolate city
Which is ruled by strangers
And delivered into the hands of tyrants.
Foreign legions have swallowed her and idolaters have inherited her,
For You destroyed her by fire
And through fire will she be rebuilt in the future,
As it is written: “And I Myself—declares the Lord—will be a wall of fire all around
it, and I will be a glory inside it” (Zech. 2:9).
Blessed are You, O Lord, builder of Jerusalem.

May it be Your will, O Lord our God,
To regard the impoverishment of Your people Israel
Scattered through all the lands,
And the ruins of Jerusalem which has become a desolation,
And Your Temple abandoned as the wilderness.
Let Your jealousy for Your holy name,
Desecrated among the nations, be roused.
Gather the remnant of Your flock
From all the places where they have been scattered.
Return Israel to its habitation
And let Your palace be properly inhabited,
For the sake of Your people and Your inheritance,
Which has been diminished,
Let them be as a mast on the mountain,
As a flag upon the heights.
For the sake of Jerusalem Your holy city
Deprived of all its glory,
Our Holy and wondrous Temple, which has become a burnt ember
And all our precious places, which have become a ruin.
The Jews Return to Jerusalem

This letter of unknown date from the Adat HaRabbanim in Jerusalem, which was found in the Cairo Geniza, describes the return of Jews to Jerusalem under the calif 'Umar I (Omar) in the seventh century and their participation in the cleaning of the Temple Mount upon which the El Aksa Mosque and Dome of the Rock were to be built.

This was the doing of our God, who granted us favor before the kingdom of Ishmael, which has now gained control of the Holy Land from Edom. When they came to Jerusalem they brought with them Israelites who could show them the site of the Temple and who then dwelt with them until this day. And they made an agreement with them that they would honor the Temple and not desecrate it and would pray at its gates, and they would not prevent this.

All the Muslims in the city and surrounding came, together with a group of Jews. Then they were ordered to sweep the site of the Temple and to clean it. Omar was in charge of their work. Whenever they uncovered another layer, he would ask the Elders of the Jews if this was the stone known as the Foundation Stone. One of the Sages explained the various sections of the place until it was uncovered. Then he ordered that the wall of the sanctuary be built and a dome be erected over the stone and overlaid with gold. Afterward the Jews sent messages to all the parts of the Land of Israel to inform them of the way in which Omar had assisted them. And they inquired of them, “How many people will be coming to Jerusalem?” They gathered before Omar and said to him, “How many of the Community of Jews will the Emir of the Believers command to come to this city?” Omar replied, “What will your enemies say? Speak to them and then I will bring an end to the controversy between you.” He then summoned the Patriarch and his friends and said to them, “Behold, these Jews have taken over all. . . . How many of them do you say shall come?” The Patriarch said, “Let the number be fifty households, including women and children.” The Jews replied, “Let us be less than two hundred households.” The controversy raged between them until Omar decreed that seventy households should come. They agreed to that. After that he asked, “Where do you wish to live within the city?” They replied, “In the southern sector of the city, which is the market of the Jews.” Their request was to enable them to be near the site of the Temple and its gates, as well as to the water of Shiloah, which could be used for immersion. This was granted them by the Emir of the Believers. So seventy households including women and children moved from Tiberias and established settlements in buildings whose foundations had stood many generations.
RABBI MOSHE BEN NAHMAN

Also known as the Ramban and Nahmanides, Moshe ben Nahman (1194–1270) was one of the greatest scholars of Spain. Born in Gerona, he functioned in Catalonia until going to the Land of Israel in 1267. In Jerusalem, he organized the community and founded a synagogue and a yeshiva. From 1268 until his death he served as the rabbi of Acre. When he arrived in Jerusalem in Elul 1267, he wrote a letter to his son describing the situation there.

LETTER TO HIS SON

I write you this missive in Jerusalem, the Holy City. All praise and thanksgiving to the Rock of my salvation, for I have been privileged to arrive in peace on the ninth day of the month of Elul. There I stayed in peace until the day after Yom Kippur, when I set out to go to Hebron, the city in which our Fathers are entombed, so that I could bow down before them and arrange for my own resting place in that holy city. What shall I tell you about the Land? How terrible is its abandonment and its desolation. The sum of it is that the holier the place, the worse the destruction. Jerusalem is more desolate than the rest of the Land, Judah more than the Galilee. Yet for all its destruction, it is wonderful. It has nearly two thousand inhabitants, about three hundred Christians who escaped from the Sultan. There are no Israelites among them, for when the Tatar hordes invaded, they fled from there and many were slain by the sword. There are only two dyers who purchase dyes from the government, unto whom a minyan gathers for prayers in their house on the Sabbath. I encouraged them and we found an abandoned building with marble pillars and a lovely arch which we converted into a synagogue, for the city is wide open, and anyone who wishes to take possession of an abandoned building can do so. People have contributed to the refurbishing of the building, and we have already sent to the city of Shechem for Torah scrolls that had been sent there for safekeeping from Jerusalem when the Tatar hordes invaded. And now we have a synagogue in which we can pray. For there are many who come to Jerusalem, men and women from Damascus, Tzova [Aleppo] and other places in order to see the Temple and to weep over it. Who ever is privileged to see it in its destruction will be privileged to see it rebuilt and repaired when the Divine Presence returns unto it. You, my son, your brothers and all your father’s household will be privileged to behold the welfare of Jerusalem and the comfort of Zion.

COMMENTARY TO THE TORAH

A mournful sight I have perceived in thee, Jerusalem. Only one Jew is here, a dyer, persecuted, oppressed, and despised. At his house gather great and small when they can get a minyan. They are wretched folk, without occupation and trade, consisting of a few pilgrims and beggars, though the fruit of the land is still magnificent and the harvests rich. Indeed it is still a blessed country, flowing with milk and honey....
Oh! I am a man who has seen affliction. I am banished from my table, removed far away from friend and kinsman, and too long is the distance for me to meet them again. . . . I left my family. I forsook my house. And there with my sons and daughters, and with the sweet and dear children whom I have brought up on my knees, I left also my soul. My heart and my eyes will dwell with them forever. . . . But the loss of all this and of every other glory my eyes saw is compensated by having now the joy of being a day in thy courts, O Jerusalem, visiting the ruins of the Temple, and crying over the desolate sanctuary; where I am permitted to caress thy stones, to fondle thy dust, and to weep over thy ruins. I wept bitterly, but I found joy in my tears. I tore my garments, but I felt relieved by it.

RABBI ESHTORI HAPARHI

Eshtori (Isaac ben Moses) haParhi was born in Provence in 1280. After the expulsion of the Jews from France he went to Spain, then traveled to the Land of Israel. He settled in Beth Shem and wrote a book describing the land on the basis of his travels. This book, Kaftor vaPerah, was completed in 1322 and was the first real geography of Israel. It also includes the following prayer to be recited at the Western Wall.

PRAYER AT THE WALL

O Unique Lord, God of this House, Light of the world! This humble person cries out, pours out his prayer and voices his bitterness, crying and lamenting, stretching forth his hands and palms toward You, O God, whose countenance is turned toward this place. He awaits Your justice, longs for Your salvation, standing in the public places where the archers of the enemy abound and the stranger not of Your people Israel rules over Your House, while "none of the house being there inside" (Gen. 39:11).

In Your faithful trustworthiness, O my God, rebuild Your house as it was afore. O You who rescues, attend to the treasured people, who are in exile because of wrath, and to Your holy city, to the splendid and renowned palace; bring them there in mercy and faithfulness. Offerings will be brought upon Your altar when You return its fame and glory.
RABBI ISAIAH HURWITZ

A noted kabbalist born in Prague ca. 1565, Rabbi Hurwitz (or Horowitz) moved to the Land of Israel in 1621 and served as rabbi in Jerusalem. In 1625 he was imprisoned by the pasha and ransomed. He died in Tiberias in 1630. From Jerusalem he wrote many letters to his children.

In Damascus two distinguished men from Safed came to me. They welcomed me and approached me with requests on behalf of the community to settle in Safed and become their head. I answered them that I had to go on to Safed, and that we could take counsel there. My intention was, however, to proceed to Jerusalem. On the same day, when I was just before the gates of the city of Damascus, a special envoy from Jerusalem came to me, one of the leaders and nobles of the city, Rabbi N. of the community of Frankfort, a brother of the Rabbi Henlis of Prague. He brought a long letter from the inhabitants of Jerusalem with an offer according to which they appointed me as Ab Beth Din [head of the Rabbinical Court] and head of the Academy until the coming of the Messiah, and they gave full power to Rabbi N. to grant me a salary according to my wish. He was not allowed to withdraw his hand from mine until I had agreed to accept that offer. For they were much afraid of the people of Safed. I praised the Lord and thanked Him that He had found me worthy to spread the Torah in Israel and Jerusalem, and influence men to serve God in truth and sincerity. . . . I answered the Rabbi that I did not wish to accept a salary from them, as they were so overburdened with obligations, because of our many sins. I told him that they should grant me only a good and comfortable lodging. This is a great thing, because there is a considerable shortage of apartments in Jerusalem, because the community of the Ashkenazim in Jerusalem is twice as big as that of Safed and increases in numbers every day. There are also many remarkable scholars of the Torah in the community of the Ashkenazim at Jerusalem. . . .

Although Jerusalem lies in ruins now, it is still the glory of the whole earth. There is peace and safety, good food and delicious wine, all much cheaper than in Safed. The community is situated in a special district of the city. This is not so in Safed, where the Jews live in an open space. That is why many robberies occur there. The Sephardim also increase very much in Jerusalem, even in the hundreds, and they build big houses there. We consider all this as a sign of deliverance, may it come speedily. Within a short time, you will hear, with the help of the Lord, that the community of the Ashkenazim is great indeed and venerable. For I know that many will come there who are desirous of joining me. May the Lord grant me life and health. I shall develop a wonderful activity for the study of Torah which so far has been without a right guidance. . . .

My beloved children, tell everybody who intends to go to the Holy Land to settle in Jerusalem. Let nobody assume that I give this advice because I shall settle there. Far be this from me! But I give this advice in all sincerity because all good is there, and nothing is lacking. The city is enclosed and surrounded by a wall. It is as big as Lwow, but the most important point is that it is particularly holy and the gate of heaven. I have firm confidence that the Lord will let much knowledge of Torah spread through me, so that the word may be fulfilled that out of Zion shall go forth the Torah (Isa. 2:3). . . .

May it be the will of the Lord that all of you be granted to come to Jerusalem in order to live there in peace, and also the whole house of Israel, that we may see the Holy City rebuilt, and may the Temple be erected soon!
Jerusalem in Medieval Poetry

From the sixth through the fifteenth centuries, there was a great flourishing of Hebrew poetry, ranging from the early psvyanim—writers of liturgical poetry—of whom we know little, through the highly personal and sophisticated Spanish poets. Jerusalem is a major theme of these poets, both as a cause of mourning for its destruction and as a symbol of hope for the restoration of Israel.

JOY OF THE WHOLE WORLD

Yose ben Yose
(LAND OF ISRAEL; CA. 600)

Through Zion make for yourself an awesome name,
Endow it, as in the past, with a royal throne;
Bring back to life the city which is the joy of the whole world
And establish your throne in the royal city;
As bright as the sun display the glories of the metropolis to the people
And manifest in our time the honor of your reign.

(TRANSLATED BY ZALMAN DIMITROVSKY)

THE LIGHTS OF ZION

(A Fragment)

Yannai
(LAND OF ISRAEL; CA. 640)

The lights of Edom have grown stronger and multiplied
   The lights of Zion have been swallowed up and destroyed.
The lights of Edom have grown mightier and brighter
   The lights of Zion have been quenched and have gone out.
The lights of Edom illuminate every corner
   The lights of Zion have retreated far away.
The lights of Edom brighten everything with their splendor
   The lights of Zion have become darker than pitch.
The lights of Edom are full and perfect
   The lights of Zion have diminished and been snatched away.
The lights of Edom have become more glorious and lovely
   The lights of Zion have been captured and extinguished.
The lights of Edom are bright enough to illumine the dead
   The lights of Zion are as forgotten as the dead...

(Translated by Reuven Hammer)

I Remember
Amittai ben Shephatiah
(Oria, South Italy; Late Ninth Century)

I remember, O God, and I am vexed
When I behold the flourishing cities of the world
While the city of God is cast down to the depths of Sheol—
Nevertheless we turn toward Yah, our eyes are toward Yah!

May it be Your will, O He who attends the sound of weeping—
To gather our tears in Your cup
And save us from all cruel decrees
For we look to You alone!

(Translated by Reuven Hammer)

My Heart Seethes
Shmuel Hanagi'd
(Cordova, Spain; 993–1055 or 1056)

My heart seethes: the halls of our youth are stripped bare;
   Urim and Tummim light the exiles’ feet.
   I dwell outside Zion, soul as a corpse,
   shamed as one slain, angel-struck.
Can strayed Israel return, walk God’s streets again,
   can the proud meet their day?
What store can we put in tradition’s store—
   the loosing of chains,
   the slavers brought down,
   the righteous uplifted, redeemed?
Shall song spill from my lips and my sons’
   from the altar steps;
Shall I yet see the sons of the Living God
   wing to Zion like doves?
MY HEART'S IN THE EAST

Judah Halevi (1075–1141)

My heart's in the east and I languish on the margins
of the west. How taste or savor what I eat?
How fulfil my vows and pledges while Sion
is shackled to Edom and I am fettered to Arabia?
I'd gladly give up all the luxuries of Spain
if only to see the dust and rubble of the Shrine.

(TRANSLATED BY GABRIEL LEVIN)

THE POET REPLIES TO ONE WHO WOULD DISSUADE HIM FROM REMOVING TO THE
LAND OF ISRAEL

Judah Halevi

Your phrases drip myrrh,
your words flow from the mountain of spice;
Your elegance, grace—and your fathers' before—
praise weeps to attain.
You greet me with fair, rolling hills of speech—
deserts where swords lie in wait,
honey-groves thick with thorns.
What—seek not Jerusalem's peace
because rife with the blind and the halt?!
Then seek, for the sake of God's House, her peace;
and for brothers and friends.
If your teaching be true, ascribe sin

to the faces turned east, to bent knees,
And sin to our fathers who walked the land through
buying vaults for their dead;
Ascribe folly to Jacob and Joseph—embalmed
and conveyed to her soil.
Fools our fathers, who moaned for her sake,
a land pagan and bleak:
Hold the altars they built wasted stone,
and their offerings vain.
Is it well to bewail Spain's dead
with the ark and the tablets forlorn?
Cherish headstones, the haunts of the worm,
shun the source of unending life,
Prefer gilded, tiled synagogue walls
to the Mountain of God?
East or West, do we have such a hope,
such a fort
As that filled with gates
facing God's—
The wide gates of Sinai, Carmel and Beth El,
of the prophets sent forth by the Lord,
And the thrones of the oil-hallowed kings.
Ours he ordained it, ours and our seeds',
yes, though peopled with jackals and wolves.
Was it other when given our fathers,
a-tangle of thistles and thorn?
Yet they wandered its length and its breadth
as through orchards of spice—
Wanderers seeking out graves
like travelers, inns;
But they traveled the roads of the Lord,
they learned the true path,
Declaring the dead would there rise from the earth,
there break dust's chains,
There the flesh sing again,
souls rest.
My friend: think, look, comprehend;
turn from nettles and snares.
Be not wooed by the wisdom of Greece,
al flowers, no fruit—
With their notion that earth was not made,
no heavens outstretched:
no beginning, no end.
Look, listen: their sages spew wind,
bricks laid on the void,
To leave your heart empty and dull
and your mouth filled with weeds.
Speak: why should I torture through twisted roads,
and abandon the mother of paths?

(TRANSLATED BY DAVID SIMHA SEGAL)
LAMENT FOR ZION

Author Unknown

We approached to ask our mother's well-being,
We stood at her door and wept.
The guards found us, they beat us, they wounded us—
“Away, unclean!” they cried to us.

Again we came, but approached not.
Upon a distant mount we stood.
She who dwells alone came out to greet us,
Gazing from her prison she faced us.

We raised our eyes to see her,
But so wasted was she that we knew her not.
Her shape and form were gone,
Bound in chains and burdened with fetters.

We raised our voice in weeping
For the desecration of Mount Moriah,
For our impoverished mother,
With nothing to sustain her.

Our cries rose in her ears
And she joined in our complaint.
She cried in supplication and lamented:
“Behold I dwell as a widow.

My sons have gone into captivity,
My sanctuary is devastated,
I am left naked and exposed—
For this do I weep.”

(TRANSLATED BY REUVEN HAMMER)