

**THE BOOK OF LIFE. A COMPLETE
FORMULA OF THE SERVICE AND
CEREMONIES OBSERVED AT THE
DEATH-BED, HOUSE OF MOURNING AND
CEMETERY; TOGETHER WITH PRAYERS
ON VISITING THE GRAVES**

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The book of life. A complete formula of the service and ceremonies observed at the death-bed, house of mourning and cemetery; together with prayers on visiting the graves by H. Vidaver

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H. VIDAVER

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ON LEAVING THE CEMETERY.

“Then shall the dust return to the earth whence it came, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” (Ezek. xii, 7.) Peace be with you, all whom death has united in this field, the last home of so many departed ones. Peace be with your souls, which have been recalled by the voice of God to eternal life. Amen.

THE END.

ON SETTING A TOMBSTONE.

"A mere shadow are our days upon the earth." (Job viii, 9.) Naught is left to me of him who has gone "to the valley of the shadow of death" but a stone bearing his name. This is all we have to mark the spot where his mortal remains are laid, to remind us of what we too shall soon become. In the grave all our efforts end. Here is nothing but a fragile stone or a nameless grave, to recall to us the memory of those whom we leave behind, unless we sow the seed of goodness and useful deeds in our earthly career, the fruits of which we shall reap in heaven.

O thou! who sleepest in the dust, this monument was not needed to recall thy name, for thy precious memory is enthroned in the hearts of many; but thy gentle qualities and kind friendship have so endeared thy image to my soul, that death alone can efface the remembrance of the loss I have sustained in thy decease.

May thy body rest in peace. Lord! in setting this stone to the memory of.....I beseech Thee to grant repose to his (*her*) soul, give him (*her*) the peace of the righteous, and admit him (*her*) to the joy of contemplating Thy divine presence.

Vouchsafe Thy mercy to me, O Lord! that my spirit may one day also enjoy eternal beatitude, and make my memory worthy of being honored and preserved among those whom I shall leave behind. Amen.

AT A GRANDPARENT'S GRAVE.

With deep veneration I approach thy tomb to do homage to thy memory, dear grandfather (*grandmother*), and recall to my mind thy many virtues. May this tribute of love and respect be a worthy offering to thy memory, which shall keep me in the path of rectitude, that I may follow the example of piety and goodness thou hast left to our family. I will strive, with the help of God, to leave a like heritage to my children.

May my vow to honor thy memory by the practice of virtue be acceptable to God, and may He aid me in my righteous endeavors. Amen.

AT A FRIEND'S OR RELATIVE'S GRAVE.

Mayest thou rest in peace, dear friend! Death has severed the tie that united us in this life, to be renewed everlastingly in a happier world, whither I shall one day follow thee.

Now, faithful to thy memory, I implore God to grant repose unto thy soul; and to vouchsafe to me the grace of a reunion when His holy will shall call me hence.

My God! permit that the soul of him (*her*) for whom I mourn, freed from earth's painful struggles, dangers and difficulties, and purified through thy mercy, may share the joys of the blessed in eternity. Amen.

seize mine, and lead me up, and show me the way unto purer light, unto higher joys.—O Lord! may my (*brother's—sister's*) spirit have attained to eternal peace, that (*his—her*) heart, satisfied by Thy river of love, be filled with the highest clearness and cheered by the highest salvation! Peace be unto this consecrated spot that contains these remains. Amen.

AT A BROTHER'S OR SISTER'S GRAVE.

May peace be thine, dear friend of my youth! What gentle memories and bitter regrets cluster around this tomb. Alas! death claimed thee too soon, and removed thee too early from those who loved thee. What grief! to think that we, whom one roof sheltered, one mother nourished, the same hearts cherished and the same hands blessed, are forever separated! We were so happy together; thy friendship was so sweet a support. Alas! thy departure has turned our joy into mourning. Nothing on earth is lasting. I grieve in my selfishness at having lost thee; but thou art happy near our Heavenly Father, and this thought will inspire me with courage and resignation, as likewise the glorious hope of meeting thee again in a better world, where eternal joy awaits the righteous.

O my God! grant unto my brother's (*sister's*) soul the happiness of the righteous; grant that, purified by death, he (*she*) may rejoice in the beatitude of Thy divine presence. Amen.