

# A Prayer For My Daughter

By Sonia Schreiber Weitz (1972)

Hear, O Israel  
Be gentle with my child  
Welcome her.

My daughter  
My beloved girl,  
My home-land  
My own beloved Israel,  
And soon they shall meet  
Standing face-to-face  
Upon the Hill...

So old – this land,  
These people Israel;  
Of prophets and sages,  
Of scholars and martyrs.  
And she, my daughter  
Who but yesterday  
Was only my child–  
And there they stand  
Upon the Hill...

Will she find it in her heart,  
Will she search her soul to know  
The love for her people,  
For her land.  
Or has it been there  
All along – ready to awaken,  
To question, to discover  
Her Heritage.

But what if I failed  
To teach this girl love,  
What then?  
How does one bequeath  
The longing for Zion?  
Does she know that this Land  
Is her very own,  
Her eternity, her home,  
Her Eretz-Israel.  
Will she meet her as a friend,  
A visitor, a tourist...  
Or as her rightful heir?

Will she shed a tear  
For the everlasting glory  
When her eyes behold  
The City of David;  
Her cradle, her source.  
Will she cast away the doubts  
Which plague her generation  
And quench her needs  
With something of value...

This girl, I begot,  
Will she truly see the beauty  
Of a desert sky at dawn,  
Or the magic of the stars  
Upon the Sea of Galilee...  
Will the meaning of all things

Come to her with the rising sun  
Above the Judean Hills...  
Or in the embrace  
Of the Valley of Kidron  
In the burning dusk...  
Or within the tombs of Hebron  
Where the spirit of the Patriarchs  
Lingers on...

Will she grasp and hold the moments  
At the Western-Wall and hear  
The voices raised in prayer  
On the Temple Mount;  
The stones rough and warm  
To her touch...  
(Whoever said that stones were cold).  
Will she plant her feet  
Firmly in the soil  
And know the strength  
Of her ancient roots,  
Which grow ever so deep  
Beneath the memorial  
At Yad-Vashem...

This girl, I pray, will understand  
And walk this land with pride,  
Her head held high.  
O Lord my God,  
See that my daughter and my land  
Come to know each other well,  
And together may they cherish  
The sweet promises of hope.

This Nation that is both  
So aged and so very young,  
And this girl-  
Who is only seventeen,  
Tie a bond between them  
And bless them with love  
And eternal peace-  
When they meet  
Upon the hill...

Hear, O Israel  
Be gentle with my child,  
Welcome her.