

Gathered To The Ancestors

כְּשֶׁאָדָם מֵת, אֹמְרִים עָלָיו, נֶאֱסַף אֶל אֲבוֹתָיו.
כָּל זְמַן שֶׁהוּא חַי, אֲבוֹתָיו נֶאֱסָפִים בּוֹ,
כָּל תָּא וְתָא בְּגוּפּוֹ וּבְנַפְשׁוֹ הוּא נֶצִיג.
שֶׁל אֶחָד מִרְבֻּבוֹת אֲבוֹתָיו מִתְחַלֵּת כָּל הַדּוֹרוֹת.

When someone dies, they say of him, he is gathered to his ancestors.
All the time that he lives, his ancestors are gathered in him,
every single cell in his body and his soul representing
one of many thousands of his ancestors since the beginning of all generations.

Yehuda Amichai, *from Patuah, Sagur, Patuah*
Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager