

The Valley of Death

by Rabbi Shefa Gold

גַּם כִּי- אֵלֶךְ בְּגַי צַלְמוֹת לֹא- אֵירָא רָע

Gam ki elech b'gay tzalmavet, lo ira ra (Psalm 23:4)

Though I walk through the Valley of Death, I will not fear,
Though I walk through the Valley of Death, my God is near.

I wrote this chant to help myself and others deal with a difficult time of tragedy. When I encounter “evil” in the world – the premature death of a friend, the terrible suffering caused by madness or terrorism, the injustice of innocents dying, the horrible suffering that “shouldn’t” have been – I may tremble inside, lose my way or become paralyzed. These words from Psalm 23 have helped me to find the steadiness of God’s presence within me, to find the path of loving, to move forward again in courage.