



“Long Island’s Oldest Synagogue. Renewed and Reinvigorated.”

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templeadasisrael.org



A TIME TO MOURN

A Guide to Planning a Funeral and
to the Ways of Mourning

Comfort, comfort to all my people (Isaiah 40:1)

*Published in loving memory of
Russ Fierman, Richard Schein, and Julie Sloane*

Important Numbers

Temple Adas Israel (631) 725-0904

Rabbi Leon Morris's study (631) 899-3718

Rabbi Leon Morris's cell phone (917) 304-5089

Yardley & Pino Funeral Home (631) 725-0251

J M O'Connell Funeral Home (631) 283-0098

Temple Adas Israel Cemetery (516) 521-8839

Independent Jewish Cemetery (631) 702-8221



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Introduction

Dear Friends,

In the landscape of time, there are peaks of joy and valleys of sorrow. Just as our community celebrates together in times of great happiness, so too do we support one another during times of profound loss. The pain of losing a loved one is also frequently accompanied by an overwhelming sense of stress. Tasks such as choosing a casket, buying a funeral plot, or preparing for the shiva may seem insurmountable. During this difficult time, the Temple Adas Israel community is here for you with support and comfort.

When you and your family experiences a loss, we can help you sort out the questions, concerns, and fears that will arise, and assist you in coping with your pain. We can also give you access to the deep wellspring of Jewish thought and practice that can give you structure and support. While there is not one “right way” to mourn, Judaism’s many rituals, prayers, and practices provide a helpful framework to express grief and to feel strengthened by community.

What follows is a guide to help both the mourner and comforter understand the process that begins before our loved ones pass away, and continues through preparing for a funeral, sitting shiva and mourning our loss. This guide addresses the practical steps one takes when a loved one dies (e.g., buying a cemetery plot, whom to call first, etc.) and teaches the wisdom of Jewish tradition about practices that comfort and heal during this time. We acknowledge that no guide can answer all questions (and also that there are many unanswerable questions). However, we hope you will use this booklet as a starting point for exploration and discussion.

We have included as well details of a **Temple Adas Israel Funeral Package** that we developed with two local funeral homes. We acknowledge that the price of funerals can climb quickly and that it is difficult for many families to make the number of choices required of them at such a vulnerable time. It is for this reason that we have negotiated with these funeral homes to make the logistics of funeral preparation easier for you if you choose this option.

It is our hope that you will find wisdom, comfort, and inspiration in these pages. If, as you read them, you have any question or just want to talk, our doors are always open.

Rabbi Leon Morris,

Student Rabbi Marc Katz, Schusterman Rabbinical Intern, Summer 2011



Preparing For a Loved One's Death

As death approaches, Rabbi Morris and the Temple Adas Israel community are here to comfort and support you. Please let us know if we can help you or a loved one in any way by calling us at (631) 725-0904.

We know that the days leading up to a death can cause a whirlwind of emotions and pain. However, it is important at that time to concentrate on the living and avoid treating your loved one as if they have already died. Funerals can be planned quickly and will always be treated with urgency. Still, there are important steps you can take in the days (and months) leading toward death. The more information you can collect about your loved one before they pass away, the easier the administrative burden will be after their death. Therefore, we suggest thinking about completing the following:

Family Information Form and Checklist

This form is for the use of the family and contains important information including your loved one's Hebrew name and their parents' Hebrew names, estate and insurance information, names of relatives, and funeral arrangements. Collecting this information is essential for filling out the death certificate, preparing the funeral, and settling your loved one's estate.

A full version of the form can be found in the appendix.

Advanced Directive (Living Will)

Some decide that they do not want to be kept alive through extraordinary means. Although it is difficult, speaking with your loved ones about these issues will greatly ease the burden of decision making later. New York State allows one to appoint a proxy for them. For more information about this and a copy of the proxy form, please visit the following link: <http://www.health.state.ny.us/forms/doh-1430.pdf>. Temple Adas Israel can also provide you with these forms.

A Will

Wills are essential documents that allow you to decide what happens to your estate after you pass away. Because there are many legal issues, both state and federal surrounding one's property and estate, we urge you to contact a lawyer. Every adult, no matter his or her age needs a will.

Ethical Will

Ever since Jacob gathered his children together around his deathbed (Gen. 49), ethical wills have remained an important means to pass on one's values, blessings, and dreams to one's family and loved ones. Often written in the form of a letter, these documents contain the essential lessons one wants to impart to those they love. For more information about these documents visit <http://www.ethicalwill.com/> and look for the free samples and resources on the website.



Immediately Preceding Death

When someone is understood to be within three days of death, they fall under the category of a *goseis*. At this time, loved ones should be especially careful to tend to the physical and emotional comfort of that person. While one should avoid praying for a loved one's death, many find comfort in praying for a loved one to find peace. Some might also find it comforting to recite Psalms, or biblical poems, many of which deal with mourning and healing. Psalms 23, 91, 103, 121, 130 and 139 are all particularly appropriate.

As a person reaches the end of his or her life there is one particular prayer that may be recited. Tradition teaches that one should repent the day before his or her death (Talmud, Shabbat 153a). For this reason, many choose to recite the *vidui*, or confessional prayer. The prayer asks God for forgiveness and to watch over one's family after he or she passes away. The prayer ends with a recitation of the Shema, an affirmation of God's oneness. Our rabbis believed that special merit would come to those who affirmed God in this way toward the end of their life.

If the dying person is unable to recite the confessional on their own, a modified version may be recited for them. It is important to note that if one recites *vidui* and then recovers, they have done nothing wrong. Many have recited the *vidui* and have been restored to health. In fact, tradition teaches that one is encouraged to repent everyday because no one truly knows when death will come.



If a Suicide Occurs

While all deaths are tragic, death by suicide is particularly painful. If someone you love has taken his or her own life please contact Rabbi Morris immediately. Full funeral and mourning practices will be observed.



When a Death Has Occurred

Depending on where a person dies there are a number of different steps one takes upon discovering a death.

In the hospital: Find the attending nurse or doctor. The doctor will prepare the death certificate and arrange for transportation of the body. Then arrangements will be made with the funeral home.

At hospice: Call the hospice physician who will prepare all necessary documents. Together you will arrange with the funeral home for transportation of the body.

At home: In some cases, your first call will be to the police or 911 to report the death and arrange for transportation of the body. Only after this phone call should you call the funeral home.

At any point along the way Rabbi Morris and the Temple Adas Israel community are here to help you navigate the often confusing array of people and numbers to call. Please call us at (631) 725-0904 or contact Rabbi Morris directly. His cell-phone number is at the beginning of this booklet (to be used in emergencies or in event of a death).

At some point during or after these initial steps, one recites the ancient formula:

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech HaOlam, Dayan Ha'emet
Blessed are you, Adonai our God, the True Judge

This phrase is the standard formula said when something bad has happened in their life. It acknowledges that things are often out of our control and that even in our time of pain and sorrow we can acknowledge God's presence.



Contacting A Funeral Home

Although Temple Adas Israel will work with any funeral home of your choice, we have a special relationship with two funeral homes on the East End of Long Island. They are:

Yardley & Pino Funeral Home

91 Hampton Street
Sag Harbor, NY 11963-4209
(631) 725-0251
<http://www.yardleypino.com>

J M O’Connell Funeral Home

30 Little Plains Road,
Southampton, NY
(631) 283-0098
<http://www.oconnellfunerals.com>

These funeral homes will be primarily responsible for transporting the body, providing the casket, and preparing obituaries and death certificates. The synagogue has worked with these two homes to develop a special Temple Adas Israel Funeral Package at a fixed cost with a standardized set of choices already made by the rabbi. One may decide to use this package or to choose other options in consultation with Rabbi Morris.

Rabbi Morris will also officiate beyond the East End at funerals for members of the congregation and their immediate families. For such funerals beyond the East End, the cost of a round-trip car service for the rabbi from Sag Harbor to the funeral home and cemetery is to be covered by the family.

There is no charge for funerals for our members and members of their immediate family. Rabbi Morris will not accept any honorarium for officiating. However, it is customary to make a contribution to the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund which is used to support various off-budget programming and for special needs that emerge within the community.



If You Need to Buy A Cemetery Plot

A Jewish cemetery is defined as a specially consecrated and designated area where Jews are buried that is closed on Shabbat and holidays. Sag Harbor has two Jewish cemeteries, both located on Route 114 just outside Sag Harbor Village. They are:

Hevra Kodetia (Temple Adas Israel’s cemetery)

(516) 521-8839 (ask for Howard Chwatsky)

Independent Jewish Cemetery

(631) 702-8221

Additionally, there are a number of other cemeteries in the area, and Rabbi Morris can direct you to these. **However, Rabbi Morris will only officiate at funerals at Jewish cemeteries.** Spouses of other faith backgrounds may be buried in these Jewish cemeteries.



Temple Adas Israel Package

Available through Yardley and Pino or O’Connell Funeral Homes

- **Transfer to funeral home** (locally, from Southampton to Montauk. Extra charges per mile will apply beyond this geographic area).
- **Arrangements**
- **Graveside Supervision**
- **Hearse for Funeral** (locally, from Southampton to Montauk. Extra charges per mile will apply beyond this geographic area).
- **Tahara** (ritual washing and preparation of the body according to Jewish tradition).
- **Shroud**
- **Simple Pine Coffin**

Total: \$3,645*

* Please note that there are additional charges for:

- Facilities fees (Yardley, O’Connell and Temple Adas Israel all set their own charges for the use of facilities for the funeral service itself).
- Grave opening fees (set by specific cemetery).
- Temporary grave marker.



Decisions Immediately Following Death

Timing of Funeral

Kevod hamet is the value of showing honor to a deceased loved one through word and action. One important way to honor a loved one is to avoid prolonging the burial. When funerals occur, Rabbi Morris and the Temple Adas Israel community will prioritize all aspects of the funeral in order to ensure it is arranged quickly and they will act with the assumption that the funeral will take place on the day following death. While it is understandable that certain extenuating circumstances may necessitate a delay (such as the arrival of a close family member from out of town), Jewish tradition understands that the period between death and burial (*anninut*) is the most painful and difficult period for a mourner and seeks to minimize it by burying a loved one as soon as possible.

Organ Donation

Jewish tradition has always valued the saving of lives. Because so many people benefit from organ donation, the Reform movement ruled that it is legally permissible (and in many cases preferable) for those to register as organ donors (CCAR Responsa, “Surgical Transplants” 1968). This is in accord with many other Orthodox authorities who have ruled likewise. We encourage

everyone to make decisions about organ donation while they are still healthy. Rabbi Morris is always available to discuss the issue and answer any questions.

Choosing a Coffin

In Hebrew, the word for coffin is *aron*. Traditionally, Jewish coffins are made of plain pine wood and include no metal. The reason for this is twofold. First, it is important that the whole casket can decompose. This is because it says in the book of Genesis (3:19), “For you are dust, and unto dust you shall return.” Second, Jewish tradition values democracy in burial. The only thing one can take into the next world with them is a good name. Therefore, all people should be treated equally during burial. This notion finds its roots in Talmudic times:

Formerly, they used to bring out the deceased for burial: the rich on a tall state bed, ornamented and covered with rich coverlets; the poor on a plain bier. The poor felt ashamed. Therefore, a law was established that all should be brought out on a plain bier (Talmud, Moed Katan 27a).

The Temple Adas Israel Funeral package includes simplest casket in keeping with this tradition. Our local funeral homes, however, are prepared to offer a wide array of caskets, many of which technically satisfy the Jewish requirement of being made entirely of wood.

Autopsies

While autopsies are generally forbidden by Jewish law, there are situations where the law requires it, or where there are mysteries surrounding a death that a family needs to know. In these rare cases, Rabbi Morris can provide a list of guidelines that the family can provide to the Medical Examiner’s office with their expressed wish that these be followed. These guidelines reinforce Jewish ideas regarding the respect for the dead and the requirements that the entire body be buried together. Generally, the Medical Examiner’s office will abide by such a request.

Cremation

Jewish tradition discourages cremation and advocates burial in the earth as a way to show respect to a loved one who has died. However, the Reform movement has stated that if cremation has taken place, the ashes should be buried in a Jewish cemetery rather than scattering them. Rabbi Morris would officiate at a funeral of someone who already has been cremated provided the ashes are not present at the service, and would also officiate at the interment of ashes in a Jewish cemetery.

Embalming

Jewish tradition advocates that one should be buried whole. For this reason, it should be ensured that the blood and organs are intact at the time of burial (with exceptions made for organ donation and autopsies – see above). For this reason and others, our tradition discourages embalming. In the event that a funeral needs to be delayed, refrigeration provides an alternative to embalming that is in keeping with Jewish tradition.



Preparing a Body For Burial

The practices of the *chevrah kadisha* or Jewish burial society are some of the most ancient practices in Judaism. Temple Adas Israel has a relationship with the ***Vaad Harabonim Chevra Kadisha of Queens*** who will travel from Queens to prepare the body in a loving and traditional Jewish way. We use the services of this *chevrah kadisha* in two ways:

Taharah

Taharah is the purification and preparation of the body for burial. Before *taharah* begins, the eyes and mouth of the deceased are closed and their limbs are straightened. The body is then turned so that the feet face the door, and some have the custom of placing the body on the floor to begin its descent into the earth. *Taharah*, the careful ritual washing of the body then begins, starting with the head and moving down the body.

Tachrichim

Following washing, the body is then dressed in a *kittel* or simple burial shroud. This simple wrapping serves to equalize all who die; just as we came into the world simple, we leave the world simple, taking only our name and good deeds. This is also the reason why traditionally, no makeup or jewelry is worn at the time of burial. Burial shrouds address a problem we deal with even today: the high cost of funerals. Jewish tradition explains:

At one time, funerals [among the Jewish people] were more difficult [because they were more costly] for the relatives [of the deceased] than the death itself, so much so that they would leave [the body] and flee. Then Rabban Gamliel came and behaved simply with regard to himself, [insisting] that they would bring his body out in linen garments. Then everyone followed his example and brought out bodies in linen garments. Rav Papa said: "Now it is the practice to bring out bodies in rough cloth worth only a zuz." (Talmud Ketubot 8b).

Shmirah

Jewish tradition believes that the soul does not depart the body immediately. For this reason, it has become a custom that someone stays with a body (or if that is not possible, in a room closest to the body) from the moment of death until burial. Out of respect for the body, a *shomer*, or guardian, should refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, singing, or speaking about business since the deceased cannot enjoy these things. Usually a *shomer* will sit quietly with the body and read from the book of Psalms, in Hebrew or English. If you would like to have a *shomer* sit with your loved one, Temple Adas Israel is in the process of enlisting a team of volunteers for this duty. Please contact the Temple at (631) 725-0904 for more information.

The Temple Adas Israel package includes the services of the Vaad Harabonim Chevra Kadisha of Queens for tahara and tachrichim, and the Adas Israel community will provide members of the synagogue to sit shmirah.

Who is a Mourner?

Traditionally a mourner is the father, mother, brother, sister, spouse, son or daughter of the deceased, although one may certainly bring others like grandchildren or close cousins into the inner circle. During the time between death and burial, a mourner is called an *onen*. Traditionally, there are no customs or practices associated with this stage. This is because the death is too raw to focus on anything particular. Rabbi Maurice Lamm writes:

“The *onen* [mourner during *aninut* period] is a person in deep distress, a person yanked out of normal life and abruptly catapulted into the midst of inexpressible grief. He is disoriented, his attitudes are disarrayed, his emotions [are] out of gear. The shock of death paralyzes his consciousness and blocks out all regular patterns of orderly thinking” (*The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning*, p. 21).

As a corollary, one need not worry about whether they are properly comforting a mourner during this stage. This is because the Talmud teaches us, “Do not console a person whose deceased relative lies before him” (Mishnah Avot 4:23). Instead, one should know that at this point in the mourning process one’s presence and compassion are all the mourner desires.

Involving Children

Funerals are often an important step in closure for a child. However, we acknowledge that often children are not at a developmental stage to fully understand what is happening at a funeral and burial. Recent scholarship has shown that in some cases what children imagine goes on at a funeral can be more disturbing than anything that actually occurs. Please consult Rabbi Morris if you would like to talk more about involving children. If you decide to bring a child, a close friend or family member who does not mind leaving the ceremony should be assigned to care for him or her.

Kriah

Ever since Jacob tore his garments upon hearing the news of his son Joseph’s death, *Kriah* or the ritual ripping of garments or ribbons pinned to garments has been an important part of the Jewish funeral practice. It symbolizes the tear that has occurred in the lives of the mourners and also gives a physical catharsis for one’s pain. For the most part, this practice is done by the deceased’s father, mother, spouse, son, daughter, brother, and sister, however others can also do it. If one is mourning a parent he or she should tear their clothes or ribbon on their left side, above their heart. For everyone else he or she should tear on their right side. *Kriah* is traditionally done while standing.



The Funeral Service

Actions associated with preparing and burying a body are known as *chesed shel emet*, or true acts of loving kindness, as there is no reward or thanks given by the deceased after one cares for him or her. Because of this, Jewish tradition contains many rituals that involve numerous members of the community, both at the cemetery and at the funeral, so that those close to the deceased may show their love.

Funeral services are traditionally short, lasting anywhere from 30-40 minutes. They usually consist of a number of traditional aspects. The first is the hesped, or the funeral eulogy. Since the most meaningful eulogies are delivered by those who knew and loved the deceased, a limited number of friends and family members may choose to speak. In those cases, Rabbi Morris will provide framing remarks. In other cases, families may choose to have Rabbi Morris create a composite of memories. Additionally, Rabbi Morris will read Psalms, and prayers for the deceased. One specific prayer heard at the funeral service is *El Malei Rachamim*. This prayer asks God to have compassion for the soul of the deceased and to watch over and guard him or her. The appendix includes a fuller description of these prayers.

At the funeral the *aron*, or casket, remains closed, but in sight during the service. Often, the casket is covered with a pall. Since the casket is often plain pine wood, this covering is meant to beautify the ceremony. Ask the funeral home or Rabbi Morris if you would like one of these covers. Following the service, the pallbearers take the coffin outside to the hearse. Most funerals have 6-8 pallbearers, who are either friends or family of the deceased but are not the primary mourners.

At the Cemetery

When one arrives at the cemetery, it is a tradition for those carrying the casket to pause seven times before reaching the grave. The number seven symbolizes the cycle of life—seven is considered a complete number in Judaism—and one pauses to display one’s unwillingness to part from a loved one. Often, someone will recite Psalm 91 during this processional. At the graveside, the rabbi or cantor will recite more psalms and poems.

Traditionally, flowers are not placed by the graveside. Often, those wishing to show respect to their loved one will make a donation to charity in their name or will provide a meal to the deceased relatives during *Shiva*. If you would like to sponsor one of these meals, please contact the synagogue at (631) 725-0904.

Once the casket is lowered into the grave immediate family, followed by relatives and friends, shovel earth into the casket. It is customary for those shoveling earth to do so initially with an overturned shovel, symbolizing the mourner’s reluctance to let go fully. Afterwards, all take turns shoveling earth into the grave until it is full. Traditionally, one does not pass the shovel to other mourners, as each person must participate in the ritual out of their own free will. In cases where one does not wish to fill in the grave completely, or where there are not sufficient able-bodied friends and relatives, one should minimally cover the top of the casket with enough earth so that it can no longer be seen.

At this point, mourners will recite either the mourners *kaddish* or the more traditional burial *kaddish* (see appendix). This Aramaic prayer exalts God even at this difficult time and asks God to send peace to the world.

After the burial is finished, guests form two parallel lines from the grave back toward the parking area. Mourners walk between these two lines as they are greeted with condolences by family and friends. The traditional condolence greeting is:

Hamakom yinachem etcham b'toch sha'ar ava'lay Tzion v'Yerushalayim
May the Omnipresent comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

This marks the transition point of the day, where the attention switches from remembering and caring for the deceased and focuses on comforting the mourners.



Following The Burial – *Shiva*

Following the burial, it is customary for those who attended the funeral and burial to wash their hands either before leaving the cemetery or upon arriving home. This marks the transition between being an *onen* (see above) and becoming a formal mourner called an *avel*. Some observe the custom of having a basin of water outside of the *shiva* house to facilitate this.

After arriving home memorial candles are lit. Mirrors are then covered and mourners sit on low stools to signal a lack of concern for personal comfort and appearance. In addition, many mourners will wear slippers, avoid wearing leather, and will remove all but the plainest, simplest jewelry.

The traditional first meal following the funeral is called the *Seudat Havra-ah*, or the meal of recovery or condolence. Traditionally, mourners eat this meal in private. All food from this meal must come from the community. Food at this meal is usually round (bagels or eggs) symbolizing the cycle of life. Temple Adas Israel's Caring Program is prepared to provide this meal to mourners in our community.

Traditionally, the *shiva* lasts seven days and is modeled after the mourning practice of Jacob's sons after his death (Gen. 50:10). However, these seven days usually amount to less, as the day of the burial counts as day one, mourning is suspended on Shabbat, and the final day ends an hour or two after daybreak. In addition to the above activities, mourners refrain from work. Friends and family fill the mourner's house to provide condolence, support, and meals. At least once a day, Rabbi Morris or a member of the community will conduct a service in the home. This service, which must have ten adult Jews present, allows the mourner a chance to reflect on their loved one and culminates in the recitation of the *Kaddish* by the mourners. Temple Adas Israel will ensure that there are enough people and prayer books at the *minyán* (*quorum of ten*).

During Shabbat, mourners are encouraged to participate in the synagogue services and are invited into the sanctuary after the *lecha dodi* prayer, where they are formally welcomed by the community. For major holidays like *Rosh Hashanah*, *Sukkot*, *Passover*, and *Shavuot*, mourning is canceled after the holiday passes. When the burial has taken place during the intermediary days of *Passover* and *Sukkot*, *shiva* begins after the festival. In all of these cases, please consult with Rabbi Morris for more details.

Visitors should be mindful to adjust the length of their visits to the needs of the mourner. It is important to note that the mourner need not entertain their guests. *Nechum avelim*, or comforting the bereaved, is a *mitzvah*, a commandment, and thus no thanks are due. For this reason, one should not be shy to visit a *shiva* house even if he or she did not receive a death announcement. There is no need to ring the bell before entering. Additionally, there is no need to entertain or “cheer up” the mourner. A friend’s presence is enough and therefore it is customary to not approach a mourner unless they approach you first. Also for these reasons, we discourage the serving of food and drink at *Shiva* houses, although we encourage friends to bring food for the mourners themselves.



Mourning Throughout The Year

Mourning is an incremental process and this is acknowledged by the way that Jewish tradition has framed its customs and traditions around mourning.

Sheloshim

It is taught that the Jewish people mourned for Moses for 30 days after his death (34:8). *Sheloshim* is a transition period after the first seven days of mourning have ended. Continuing for 30 days after burial, those who are in *sheloshim*, which means 30, begin to return to their normal lives. This is traditionally the time when people return to work and continue their routine but refrain from overtly festive and social activities. Traditionally, it is customary for men at this time to remain unshaven as a sign of their continued mourning, and for men and women to refrain from getting haircuts. All mourners continue to say *Kaddish* daily throughout this time. The 30th day concludes mourning for all mourners except for children mourning the loss of a parent. Rabbi Morris will provide more information associated with the spiritual practices associated with these times.

Shanah

Shanah literally means year. Traditionally, children of the deceased continue to observe laws of mourning for an entire year, refraining from entertainment and other festive celebrations. Children also recite *Kaddish* for their parents for a full 11 months after a parent's death. At Temple Adas Israel, we will continue to read their name on the *Kaddish* list for this time period. Rabbi Morris will provide more information associated with the spiritual practices about these times.

Yizkor

Following burial, and four times a year, at Passover, *Shavuot*, *Yom Kippur*, and *Shmini Atzeret*, it is traditional to have a formal memorial service to remember those who have died. This service is called the *Yizkor* service, meaning memorial. Temple Adas Israel conducts these services often. For more information about them, visit the Temple website (www.templeadasisrael.org) or call us 631-725-0904. If we are not conducting this service for a particular holiday we will help you find one in the area.

The Unveiling

Ever since Jacob marked Rachel's grave with a pillar (Gen. 35:20), Jews have observed the custom of marking graves. We suggest that you consult with Rabbi Morris before finalizing the inscription. Gravestones often include the Hebrew and English names of the deceased as well as the dates of birth and death. If you are not sure of the Hebrew spelling of the name, you can send a copy of the engraver's stencil to Rabbi Morris at the synagogue for verification. The monument company will provide you with a copy of the stencil.

After the stone is carved and anytime between the end of *shloshim* (30 days) and the one year anniversary of the death, it is customary to have an unveiling of the stone or monument. This ceremony traditionally does not need a rabbi and includes the reading of Psalms as well as the recitation of *Kaddish* or *El Malei Rachamim* (see appendix). Rabbi Morris asks family members to consider writing a letter to their deceased loved one and reading it at the unveiling.

In addition to the tombstone one may wish to commemorate a loved one's memory in other ways:

- Tree of Life Leaf – this is a small plaque that will hang on our Tree of Life commemorating the life of a loved one.
- Tree of Life Rock – a larger and more prominent plaque around the Tree of Life.
- Memorial Plaque – these plaques are hung in the sanctuary and are illuminated each year on the month of a loved one's *yahrzeit*.
- Sponsoring *Oneg / Kiddush* – one may choose to publically celebrate a loved one's life by sponsoring a Friday night *Oneg* or Saturday morning *Kiddush*. Temple Adas Israel will make your donation known as well as celebrate the memory of your loved one.

For pricing information or to reserve one of these opportunities, please contact the synagogue (info@templeadasisrael.org)

Yahrzeit

On the anniversary of the death one lights a 24-hour candle in memory of the deceased. It is also customary to make charitable contributions at this time. Each year on the *Shabbat* following the anniversary of a loved one's death, we will read their name in the synagogue before the *Kaddish*. It is customary to come to services and recite *Kaddish* for them.

Mourning For Member Of Other Faith Backgrounds

We acknowledge that there are many Jews whose family of origin is not Jewish or who have spouses or close family from other religious backgrounds. As in all other cases, the Temple Adas Israel community is available for help and support at a time of loss. If you choose, their names can be added to the *Kaddish* list.

Books About the Laws and Practices of Funerals

***Saying Kaddish: How to Comfort the Dying, Bury the Dead, and Mourn As a Jew,* by Anita Diamant**

Using the *Kaddish* as a jumping off point, Diamant explains the history and liturgical significance of the ancient prayer and links her teachings to an easy to read description of Jewish death and mourning practices.

***Jewish Way in Death and Mourning (Revised and Expanded Edition),* by Maurice Lamm**

One of the most accessible guides to all the laws and customs surrounding death and the rituals associated with it. This book has a traditional orientation.

***Wrestling With the Angel: Jewish Insights on Death and Mourning,* by Jack Riemer (ed).**

This book is composed of essays in which contributors try to show how the resources of the Jewish tradition can be of help through the end of life and provide healing for those who mourn. Some of the essays provide information about the Jewish way in death and dying and explain some of the main rituals and traditions, but most of them are testimonies. The book focuses on three issues: whether it is permissible to hasten the process of dying, what is meant by afterlife and what can be hoped for after this life is done (description from Booklist).

***A Time to Mourn, a Time to Comfort: A Guide to Jewish Bereavement,* by Ron Wolfson**

A step by step guide both for those in mourning and for those who are comforting them about how to navigate the laws and customs, as well the emotions that come with planning a funeral and mourning for the dead.

Books of Comfort or Reflection on Death

Mourning & Mitzvah: A Guided Journal for Walking the Mourner's Path Through Grief to Healing, by Anne Brener

A guidebook for those facing loss. The author takes people step by step through the mourning process and offers guidance and insight along the way.

When Bad Things Happen to Good People, by Harold Kushner

The author examines the traditional views on theodicy (why evil and bad happen in the world) in an attempt to understand the premature death of his son.

To Begin Again: The journey toward comfort, strength, and faith in difficult times, by Naomi Levy

Levy wrote the book she wishes was around for her when her father was murdered during her childhood. She writes a book about her experience working with people around loss and she questions whether anyone truly gets past a loss.

When a Grandparent Dies: A Kid's Own Remembering Workbook for Dealing with Shiva and the Year Beyond, by Nechama Liss-Levinson

Appropriate for children aged 7-11 this workbook helps children reflect on a loss of a grandparent throughout the yearlong cycle of mourning. Parents are encouraged to work with their children on this workbook.

Grief in Our Seasons: A Mourner's Kaddish Companion, by Kerry M. Olitzky

Olitzky merges the Jewish textual tradition with the calendar of mourning providing mourners with daily texts to reflect and meditate on as they move through the cycle of healing.

Jewish Reflections on Death, by Jack Riemer (ed)

Beginning with an introduction by Kubler-Ross this collection includes articles by Joseph Soloveichik ("The Halachah of the First Day"), Abraham Joshua Heschel ("Death as Homecoming"), and Elie Wiesel ("The Death of My Father"), this collection includes personal essays and reflections that have comforted and inspired those for decades.

Kaddish, by Leon Wieseltier

A powerful and poetic meditation and death and the meaning of the *Kaddish*, written after the author's father passed away.

El Malei Rachamim

אֵל מֵלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בְּמְרוֹמִים, הַמַּצֵּא מְנוּחָה נְכוֹנָה תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי הַשְּׁכִינָה,
בְּמַעְלוֹ קְדוּשִׁים וְטְהוּרִים כְּזֹהַר הַרְקִיעַ מְזְהִירִים, אֶת נַשְׁמַת (פְּלוֹנִי) בֶּן (פְּלוֹנִי)
שֶׁהֵלַךְ לְעוֹלָמוֹ, בְּגַן עֵדֶן תְּהֵא מְנוּחָתוֹ, אֲנֵא בְּעַל הַרְחָמִים יִסְתַּיְרָהוּ בְּסֶטֶר
כַּנְּפֵי רֵת לְעוֹלָמִים, וְצָרוֹר בְּצָרוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת נַשְׁמָתוֹ, וְהוּא נִחְלָתוֹ, וְיָנוּחַ בְּשָׁלוֹם
עַל מִשְׁכְּבוֹ. וְנֹאמֵר אָמֵן

Transliteration:

El malei rachamim shokhen ba-m'romim ha-m'tzei m'nuchah n'khonah tachat kanfei ha-sh'khinah b'ma'alot k'doshim u't'horim c'zohar ha-rakiah maz'hirim et nishmat (ploni ben ploni) she-ha-lach l'olamo b'gan eden t'hiyeh m'nuchato. Ana ba'al ha-rachamim yas'tire'hu b'seter k'nafekha l'olamim, u-tz'ror bitz'ror ha-chayim et nishmato. Adonai hu nachalato v'yanuchu b'shalom al mish'kavo, v'nomar amen.

Translation:

Compassionate God, eternal Spirit of the universe, grant perfect rest in Your sheltering presence to _____, who has entered eternity. O God of mercy, let him/her find refuge in the shadow of Your wings, and let his/her soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. God is his/her inheritance. May he/she rest in peace, and let us say: Amen.

Mourners *Kaddish*

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרְעוּתֵהּ, וְיִמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתֵהּ. בְּחַיֵּיכוּן
וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמִי וּלְעָלְמֵי עַלְמֵיָא. יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר
וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקַדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֵלְמָא מִן כָּל
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִסְמָתָא, דְאִמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא, וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוּמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Transliteration:

*Yitgaddal v'yitkaddash sh'meh rabbah. B'almah dee-v'ra chiru-the v'yamlich malchuteh. B'chay-
yechon uv'yo-meychon uv'chay-yey de-chol beit yisra-el, ba-agalah uvizman kareev; v'imru Amen.*

Y'hey sh'mey rabbah m'varach l'olam ul'olmey almah-yah.

*Yitbarach, v'yishtabach, v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yisnasseh v'yit-haddar v'yit-alleh v'yit-hallal
sh'mey de kudshah b'reech hu*

*L'eylah min kol birchatah v'shiratah tush-b'chatah v'nechematah daa-amiran b'almah
V'imru Amen.*

Y'heh sh'lamah rabbah min sh'mayah v'chay-yim alenu v'al kol yisra-el v'imru amen.

O-seh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom alenu v'al kol yisra-el v'imru Amen.

Translation:

May the great Name of God be exalted and sanctified throughout the world, which He has created according to His will. May His Kingship be established in your lifetime and in your days, and in the lifetime of the entire household of Israel, swiftly and in the near future; and say, Amen.

May His great name be blessed, forever and ever.

Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, honored elevated and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He- above and beyond any blessings and hymns. Praises and consolations which are uttered in the world; and say Amen. May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life, upon us and upon all Israel; and say, Amen.



Burial *Kaddish*

(To be said at graveside)

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי הוּא עֵתִיד לְאַתְחַדְתָּא וּלְאַחֲיָא מַתְיָא
וּלְאַסְקָא יְתְהוֹן לְחַיִּי עֵלְמָא וּלְמַבְנֵא קַרְתָּא דִּי יְרוּשָׁלַם וּלְשִׁכְלָלָא הִיכְלָה בְּגוּיָה
וּלְמַעְקַר פְּלַחְנָא נְכֻרָאָה מִן אַרְעָא וּלְאַתְבָּא פְּלַחְנָא דִּי שְׁמַיָּא לְאַתְרָהּ, וְיִמְלִיךְ
קֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּמַלְכוּתֵהּ וְיִקְרָה. בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיִּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלְמָא וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמַיָּא. יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר
וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֵלָא מִן כָּל
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִחְמָתָא, דְאָמִירִן בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

Transliteration:

*Yitgaddal v'yitkaddash sh'meh rabbah. B'al-ma d'hu atid l'it-cha-da-ta ul'ach-aya'a ma-taya,
ul'asa-ka yat-hon l'chayei al-ma, ul'miv-nei kar-ta di y'-ru-shal-em, ul'shach-lala ha'ch-la b'ga-va,
ul'ma-akar pal-cha-na nuch-ra-a min ara, ul-a-ta-va pal-cha-na d'sh-ma-ya l'at-ra, v'yam-lich
kud-sha b'rich hu b'mal-chu-ta v'ka-ra. B'chay-yechon uv'yo-meychon uv'chay-yey de-chol beit
yisra-el, ba-agalah uvizman kareev; v'imru Amen.*

Y'hey sh'mey rabbah m'varach l'olam ul'olmey almah-yah.

*Yitbarach, v'yishtabach, v'yitpa-ar v'yitromam v'yisnasseh v'yit-haddar v'yit-alleh v'yit-hallal
sh'mey de kudshah b'reech hu*

*L'eylah min kol birchatah v'shiratah tush-b'chatah v'nechematah daa-amiran b'almah
V'imru Amen.*

Y'heh sh'lamah rabbah min sh'mayah v'chay-yim alenu v'al kol yisra-el v'imru amen.

O-seh shalom bimromav hu ya-aseh shalom alenu v'al kol yisra-el v'imru Amen.

Translation:

*May the great Name of God be exalted and sanctified. In the world which will be renewed and
where He will give life to the dead and raise them to eternal life and rebuild the city of Jerusalem
and complete His temple there and uproot foreign worship from the earth and restore Heavenly
worship to its position and the Holy One, blessed is He, reign in His sovereignty splendor.*

*May His Kingship be established in your lifetime and in your days, and in the lifetime of the
entire household of Israel, swiftly and in the near future; and say, Amen.*

May his great name be blessed, forever and ever.

Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, honored elevated and lauded be the Name of the holy one, Blessed is he- above and beyond any blessings and hymns, Praises and consolations which are uttered in the world; and say Amen. May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life, upon us and upon all Israel; and say, Amen.

Vidui: The Final Confession

Vidui

(Bedside confession – may be recited by or on behalf of a loved one)

אֱלֹהֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתַי וְאֲמוֹתַי

Elohai v'elohei avotai v'imotai

My God and God of all who have gone before me, Author of life and death, I turn to You in trust. Although I pray for life and health, I know that I am mortal. If my life must soon come to an end, let me die, I pray, at peace.

If only my hands were clean and my heart pure! I confess that I have committed sins and left much undone, yet I know also the good that I did or tried to do. May my acts of goodness give meaning to my life, and may my errors be forgiven.

Protector of the bereaved and the helpless, watch over my loved ones. Into Your hand I commit my spirit; redeem it, O God of mercy and truth.

בְּיָדוֹ אֶפְקִיד רוּחִי, בְּעֵת אִישָׁן וְאֶעֱרָה.

וְעִם רוּחִי גִוְיָתִי, יי לִי וְלֹא אִירָא.

B'yado afkid ruche, b'ait ishan v'a-irah

V'im ruche g'viyati, Adonai li v'lo ira

In your hands I entrust my spirit, when I sleep and when I wake,

And with my spirit my body also; Adonai is with me and I shall not fear

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יי אֶחָד

Sh'ma yisrael, Adonai eloheinu, Adonai echad

Listen, Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is one



Checklist of What To Do If A Loved One Dies

Immediately Following Death:

- If during business hours, contact Temple Adas Israel (631) 725-0904 and ask to speak to Rabbi Morris.
- If you cannot get through or you are calling after business hours, please try him on his cell phone (917) 304-5089. Messages left over Shabbat will be returned within one hour after nightfall on Saturday evening.
- Contact the funeral home to arrange for someone to transport the body and arrange a time to meet with the funeral director about details such as picking a casket and the date of the funeral. Please remember to speak with Rabbi Morris first and to consult our Temple Adas Israel funeral packages as it will make your discussions with the funeral homes easier.
- Notify close family and friends of the deceased immediately so you can begin to get a sense of the timing of the funeral.
- Make a list of other family, friends, and employees who should be notified. Delegate that list to someone else. In some cases, this list may include lawyers, the Veterans administration, insurance carriers, and financial consultants.
- Prepare a death notice and obituary with the funeral director.
- Fill out any needed paperwork through the doctor.
- Locate necessary documents such as wills, directives and, if possible, a Family Information Form and Checklist (see above section).

Funeral and Burial Arrangements:

- Determine dates of *shiva*, the time of *shiva minyanim*, and other details and contact Rabbi Morris with that information.
- Confirm funeral and burial arrangements with Rabbi Morris and the funeral home. Would you like the funeral service at Temple Adas Israel, graveside, or at the funeral home?
- Decide if your loved one will be buried in a particular *tallit* or if you would like to keep it as an heirloom.
- Decide who will officiate at the funeral and who will give the eulogies and remembrances.
- Assign pallbearers to carry the casket.
- Assess whether the space for the funeral is sufficient for the number of guests.

- Arrange for a car or limo to and from the funeral home and cemetery. The funeral home will have these details.
- Find a babysitter or adult who can leave the funeral service with a child if the need arises.
- Make sure there are directions from the funeral to the burial and information on how to get to the *shiva* house.
- Find someone to stay at the house during the funeral and burial.
- Ask the funeral director for ribbons to use during *kriah*.

During *Shiva*

- The Temple Adas Israel Caring Program will arrange for members to provide the meal of comfort, *s'eudat havra'ah* for the immediate mourners to eat after returning from the cemetery.
- If you choose, place a basin of water outside of house for hand washing.
- If you choose, cover mirrors as a sign of disinterest in vanity during this time.
- Find a friend who can schedule meal preparation / delivery for the family during the days they are sitting *shiva*.
- Find low chairs, prayerbooks, *shiva* candles, and *kippot* for *shiva*. The funeral director can aid you in getting all of these items.

After *Shiva*

- Designate charitable organizations that you may want to consider contributing to in honor of your loved one. We hope you will consider Temple Adas Israel.
- Order a memorial plaque for your loved one.
- Begin thinking about a date for an unveiling and what you would like written on the tombstone.

Note: This checklist is heavily drawn from a similar guide by Temple Beth El, South Orange, NJ.



Family Information Form

First, Middle, Last Name _____

Hebrew Name _____

Kohen / Levi / Yisrael _____

Father's English Name _____

Father's Hebrew Name _____

Mother's English Name _____

Mother's Hebrew Name _____

Mother's Maiden Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Location of Birth _____

Location of Birth Certificate _____

Social Security Number (and location of card) _____

Military Service (if any) and location of discharge papers _____

Health Insurance Company and Policy # _____

Life insurance Company and Policy # _____

Any other insurance (disability, accident etc.) _____

Attorney Name and Telephone Number _____

Location of Will _____

Location of Safety Deposit Box (and keys) _____

Bank Accounts (locations and account #s) _____

Location of advance directives _____

Location of ethical will _____

Location of cemetery plot and deed _____

Are there real estate documents and what is their location _____

Any specific funeral preferences? _____



Glossary

Aron –casket, usually a plain pine box with no metal

Avel – term for a mourner after a loved one has been buried (*Avelut* is the act of mourning)

Bikur Cholim – visiting the sick, one of the most significant *mitzvot* in the Torah

Baruch Dayan Ha-emet – “Blessed is the true judge,” the blessing one says after a loved one has died

Chesed Shel Emet – “true loving kindness,” the term for the act of burial because one cannot be repaid for their act

Chevrah Kadisha – a Jewish burial society responsible for washing, dressing, and watching the body

El Malei Rachamim – “God full of compassion,” one of the traditional prayers said during the funeral

Hesped – Eulogy

Kaddish – A prayer recited by mourners for one month and by children for 11 months, after the death of a loved one

Kever - grave

Kriah – ritual ripping of a garment or a ribbon after death

Levayah – Hebrew term for funeral, literally meaning “to accompany”

Metzeivah – a “pillar” set up as a memorial to those who have passed away

Onen – a mourner during the time between death and burial

Nichum Avelim – “comforting the mourner,” one of the greatest *mitzvot* in the Torah

Seudat Ha'avrah – the traditional meal following burial that includes round foods, symbolizing life

Shloshim – the thirty days following burial

Shiva – the seven days of mourning following burial

Shomer – a person who guards a corpse between death and burial

Tachrichim – plain garments and wrappings (also called a kittel) that are worn at the time of burial

Tahara – the ritual washing of a body

Yahrzeit - the yearly anniversary of a loved one's death

Yizkor – The four-times-a-year service that remembers loved ones who have died



