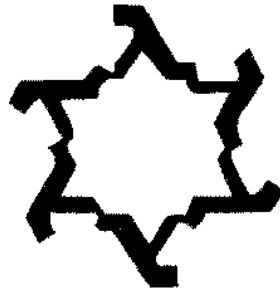


**When your  
loved one  
dies ...**

**...will you know  
what to do?**



**Death and Mourning:**

**Bet Mishpachah  
will be there to help**

## **In Jewish Tradition ...**

- ❖ there are few communal *mitzvot* more important than caring for those who are near death, helping with funeral arrangements, and comforting the bereaved
- ❖ observances may vary from Ashkenazi to Sephardi and from Orthodox to Reform, but are all based on such commonly held values as love for our neighbor, respect for the human body, equality before our Creator, and reverence for those who preceded us
- ❖ people should not be left to die alone, but should be comforted to the end
- ❖ the body should be treated with respect and, if possible, not be left unattended
- ❖ prompt burial, the use of a plain, white shroud, and an all-wood coffin are encouraged
- ❖ public viewing, cremation, automatic autopsies, and large floral displays are discouraged
- ❖ the funeral service includes a eulogy and the prayer *Eil Malei Rachamim*
- ❖ mourners express their grief and remember the dead by symbolically tearing a garment through the ceremony of *k'ria* before the funeral, and observing *shiva* followed by mourning periods of 30 days and one year, then reciting *Kaddish* at annual *yartzeit* observances
- ❖ everyone may participate in the funeral and mourning by shoveling earth over the coffin, preparing a meal of comfort for the bereaved, and visiting and comforting the bereaved during *shiva*
- ❖ *tzedaka* (charity) is given to honor the deceased

## **Advance Planning...**

- ❖ has been a part of Judaism since Abraham purchased the Cave of Machpeila as a family burial place
- ❖ provides peace of mind at the time of death, relieves much of the burden placed on survivors, and assures compliance with the deceased wishes

## **Therefore your family and you should...**

- ❖ select and purchase burial sites
- ❖ prepare instructions expressing your wishes about your funeral and leave them where they can be found easily
- ❖ consult with a lawyer to prepare a durable power of attorney and advance medical directive for health care to provide for someone to make medical decisions on your behalf if you become incapacitated or terminally ill
- ❖ leave instructions for organ donation in case of death
- ❖ prepare a will for disposition of your estate
- ❖ discuss your plans with members of the Bereavement Support Committee and the Rabbi

## **Bet Mishpachah...**

- ❖ is prepared, in the event of the death of a member or of a parent, sibling, partner, or child of a member, to:
  - lead a funeral service at the mortuary chapel, or at another location arranged for by the bereaved
  - lead a burial service at a site arranged for by the bereaved
  - arrange for a meal of comfort immediately following the burial or provide some refreshments during a subsequent shiva or a later memorial service
  - lead up to three shiva services or a memorial service
  - lead an unveiling service
- ❖ is a member of the Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington, which has price controlled contracts with local funeral homes. The services provided include:
  - transfer of the deceased
  - preparation of the body without embalming
  - preparation of documents
  - a standard all-wood coffin
  - coordination with Bet Mishpachah for a funeral and interment
- ❖ will send *yartzeit* reminders to members and announce the names of the deceased annually at services at the member's request.

## In the Event of a Death...

- ❖ notify the Rabbi, [rabbi@betmish.org](mailto:rabbi@betmish.org), and the Bereavement Support Committee, [bereavement@betmish.org](mailto:bereavement@betmish.org)
- ❖ if you wish to use the Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington ([www.dc.jewish-funerals.org](http://www.dc.jewish-funerals.org)) negotiated price controlled Jewish Funeral contracts call either

Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home  
Rockville, MD at (301) 622-2290

Cunningham-Turch Funeral Home  
Alexandria, VA at (703) 549-1800

### Nonprofit Jewish Cemeteries

Bet Mishpachah section at Elesavetgrad Cemetery  
SE Washington, DC [cemetery@betmish.org](mailto:cemetery@betmish.org)

Garden of Remembrance Memorial Park  
Clarksburg Md. (301) 428-3000

### Commercial Jewish Cemeteries

Judean Memorial Gardens (301) 384-1000  
Olney, Md.

King David Memorial Gardens (703) 560-4400  
Falls Church, Va.

Menorah Gardens (301) 881-2151  
Rockville, Md.

Mount Lebanon (301) 434-4640  
Adelphi, Md.

### For Additional Observances ...

such as ritual washing (*tahara*) and guarding of the body (*shmira*), consult the Rabbi.

### Other Resources

*Chesed Shel Emes*  
Hebrew Free Burial Society (301) 230-7290

# Suggested Reading

Brener, Anne, *Mourning & Mitzvah - A Guided Journal for Walking the Mourner's Path Through Grief to Healing*. 25<sup>th</sup> anniv. ed. 2017 Jewish Lights Publishing

Diamant, Anita. *Saying Kaddish: How to Comfort the Dying, Bury the Dead, and Mourn as a Jew*. 1998. New York: Schocken Books

Kay, Alan *A Jewish Book of Comfort* 1993 Jason Aronson, Inc

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Riemer, Jack. *Jewish Reflections on Death*. 1974. New York: Schocken Books

Soncino, Rifat. *What Happens After I Die?* 1990. New York: UAHC Press

Wolfson, Ron, *A Time to Mourn, A Time to Comfort* 1996 Jewish Lights Publishing

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## **Bet Mishpachah**

*Washington, DC's Egalitarian Synagogue  
Embracing a Diversity of Sexual & Gender  
Identities*

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