

Young Israel of North Netanya Synagogue Chevra Kadisha

Burial in Netanya

In time of sorrow a kind word and a helping hand can bring much needed comfort.

As a congregation, we must be aware of the help we can give to all persons who are in mourning, be it by attending the funeral, visiting the mourners while they are sitting Shiva, attending services at the Shiva house or helping with meals for the mourners. The care shown at this time is greatly appreciated and is its own satisfaction.

Members have asked to be made aware of the procedure and customs surrounding the unfortunate event of the passing away of a dear relative. They have also expressed some concern as to the current practice of the Chevra Kadisha of Netanya in relation to "burial in depth" (also referred to as "layer burial") in the cemetery at Vatikim, Netanya.

The purpose of this booklet is to help members deal with logistical concerns, advise them of the rights, burial costs and any other relevant details, as well as to provide information about customs and laws surrounding burial and mourning.

Burial in Depth

Because of lack of space in the cemetery the Chevra Kadisha started burial in depth from January 2012. This relates only to married couples. Single people continue to be buried in separate graves.

If members already have a reserved plot or plots these will be honoured by the Chevra Kadisha and burials will take place in the reserved plot or plots.

The present practice of the Chevra Kadisha when they are called to deal with the funeral arrangements of the first spouse to die is to ask the family to make an election.

The family will need to tell the Chevra Kadisha what they choose between:

1. A separate grave for the deceased without the surviving spouse being buried alongside. The adjoining plot, for Halachic reasons, is then kept available for a person of the same gender as the deceased. This means that when the survivor dies he/she will be buried elsewhere in the cemetery where there is an available space.
2. A separate grave for the deceased with a reservation for the surviving spouse to be buried alongside. The present cost for such a reservation

is 28,000 shekels and has to be paid at that time. This can be paid in 5 instalments either by postdated cheques or by credit card.

3. The deceased to be buried in a grave 12 feet below ground with reservation of the top tier for the surviving spouse. The present reservation fee for the top tier is 5860 shekels and has to be made at that time. This can be paid by 5 instalments either by postdated cheques or by credit card.

The family should make sure to keep all receipts and certificates issued in respect of 2 and 3

Notes

- Reservation fees are subject to change.
- Free burial is for residents of Netanya and also for any visitors who may die in Netanya. Persons who are not residents of Netanya and persons who do not die in the city must satisfy the Chevra Kadisha of their Jewish identity. The visitor who dies in the city and whose Jewish identity is established is buried free but the person who does not die in the city must pay a fee, to be arranged at the time, if they wish to be buried in Netanya. If a resident of Netanya or a person who dies in Netanya wishes to be buried in another city e.g. Jerusalem, arrangement has to be made with the Chevra Kadisha of that city and such payment made to them as may be required.

Tombstones

The custom in Israel is to set the tombstone as soon after the shiva as is convenient to the family. The choice of the stonemason is that of the family. For those who require English speaking stonemasons the following are available:

Mr. Winkler 09 882 4710 and 050 335 7162

Mr. Yehuda Akiva 050 762 5325

The stonemason advises as to the type and height of the tombstone which is acceptable to the Chevra Kadisha. Catalogues are also available to assist in the choice. The Chevra Kadisha charge the stonemason a fee for a single burial tombstone of 500 shekels. For a tombstone where there has been a burial in depth the charge is 1000 shekels. The stonemason requires the family to pay him this fee at the time the stone is being ordered. The stonemason passes on the fee to the Chevra Kadisha. The Chevra Kadisha do not automatically provide the family with a receipt for this fee. If the family wish to have a receipt for this, they need to ask the Chevra Kadisha who will then provide it. The stonemason is not allowed by the Chevra Kadisha to put up the stone unless he pays the fee. NB The fees above may change.

The cost of the tombstone is of course a separate matter depending on the choice of the family, and is paid to the stonemason. Before ordering the

tombstone it could be helpful for the family to go to the cemetery and take photographs of the types of tombstone, lettering and wording. You can then discuss these with the stonemason to help in deciding on the one you require.

In the case of a burial in depth, on the death of the surviving spouse the tombstone will need to be lifted by the stonemason who originally set the tombstone so as enable that burial to take place. The stonemason will then have to replace the tombstone after the second burial. The family must make these arrangements with the stonemason and pay the fee which they agree with him.

Procedure and Customs

In the event of a death, the family should inform me or Alan Gold (or in the absence of both of us the contact is Yitzhak Bakst). We get in touch with the Chevra Kadisha and arrange for their representative to see the family as soon as possible to sign up the papers for the burial. The family need to have available the Teudah Zehut of the person who has died.

Death in Hospital

(i) If the person dies in a hospital or a bet avot in Netanya, the Chevra Kadisha remove the body for Tahara and bring it to the cemetery without charge.

(ii) If the person dies in a hospital outside of Netanya the charges for an ambulance to bring the body to Netanya are:

500 shekels from Meir Hospital, Kfar Saba

700 shekels from Ichilov Hospital, Tel Aviv

800 shekels from Tel Hashomer Hospital, Tel Aviv.

If elsewhere, the charge needs to be checked at the time.

The fees for the person who assists us in this service and other matters (see below - Death at Home) should be paid by the family at the time of making the burial arrangements, but if this is inconvenient the person trusts us to get the money from the family later and pass it on to him. Note: These charges are subject to change.

Death at Home

If a death occurs at home call Magen David Adom (telephone 101). Do not be surprised if MDA call the Police. This is a necessary precaution when a death occurs at home. The body should not be moved until after the Police have issued a certificate. The family should then call me. Alan or Yitzhak (if they have not already called us when the death has taken place) to arrange for the Chevra Kadisha to come to the home. The procedure is then as in page 2 above. The body should not be moved but only covered until the Chevra Kadisha arrive to take away the body.

Death at home on Shabbat or Yom Tov

If the death occurs at home on Shabbat or Yom Tov the body should not be moved (it can be covered) and the same procedure of Magen David Adom and Police has to be followed. After the Police give their certificate, if there is only a short time to the end of Shabbat or Yom Tov the body should not be moved but only covered until one of our committee can call the Chevra Kadisha after Shabbat or Yom Tov. If however there is a long time till the end of Shabbat or Yom Tov e.g. Friday night or Shabbat and Yom Tov following one another, the family can call the "Shabbat goy" of the Chevra Kadisha and he will arrange to remove the body to the Laniado Hospital mortuary (cold room). After Shabbat or Yom Tov the family should call me Alan or Yitzhak who will then arrange for the Chevra Kadisha to come and make the funeral arrangements. The "Shabbat goy" is Ahmed - phone no. 053 751 6269. If he does not answer the telephone, call the Emergency Department of Laniado Hospital 09 860 4630 and tell them the situation. They will make contact with Ahmed. One should try and get a non-Jew to make the telephone calls on Shabbat and Yom Tov.

If the person has died at home the Chevra Kadisha will remove the body for Tahara and bring it to the cemetery at no charge if this is between the hours of 8.00 - 16.00 Sunday to Thursday and 8.00 - 13.00 on Friday.

As it sometimes takes the Chevra Kadisha a while to meet up with the family, a delay which can be distressing, we contact an individual who provides this service privately for which he charges 450 shekels.

This person also obtains, for a fee of 400 shekels, the Certificate of Burial from the Iriya and arranges the time of the funeral after discussion with the family (and the Rabbi of the Shul if he can attend).

The family should be prepared to give the following information to the Chevra Kadisha at the time a funeral is being arranged:

- (i) Whether there is a reserved plot in the cemetery
- (ii) Whether the deceased is a Cohen or the wife of a Cohen
- (iii) If wheelchair access to the grave is required by any member of the family.

In cases of (ii) and (iii) This will enable the Chevra Kadisha to arrange a plot adjoining a pathway so that members of the family will have access to the grave.

(iv) The election of single or double burial - see Burial in Depth on page 2

(v) If there is a special reason for a delay in the funeral e.g. a close member of the family travelling from abroad.

The Chevra Kadisha require a certificate that the deceased is Shomer/Shomeret Shabbat if it is desired for the person to be buried in the religious section of the cemetery. I, Alan, or Yitzhak arrange for the Rabbi of the Shul to provide this certificate.

Coach

If the family require a coach to take people to the cemetery, I, Alan, or Yitzhak can arrange this. The cost of a coach to Vatikim cemetery is presently 600 shekels (sometimes an additional amount is charged for Fridays or for funerals at night) plus a tip of 50 shekels for the driver. The Shul lays this out and asks the family for re-imburement after the Shiva or Shloshim. The Shul also lays out 300 shekels which it has been the custom to give to the gravediggers, and recovers it from the family later. There are no other payments for the burial unless the family wish to have the body brought to the home of the deceased before the burial (for hespedim or for any other reason) before being taken to the cemetery for burial. The Chevra Kadisha's present charge is 800 shekels for this service.

Keriah is normally cut at the cemetery just before the funeral. For a parent the keriah is on the left side of the garment (over the heart). For other relatives keriah is on the right side of the garment. After the initial cut, the mourner should tear the garment downward approx. 8 centimeters (approx. 3.5 inches). For reasons of modesty, a woman may pin up or cover the tear or crudely sew up the tear. It is also permissible for keriah for a woman to be performed in the privacy of her home prior to departure for the cemetery. Burial is not in a coffin. The deceased is wrapped in shrouds and placed on a pallet which is then draped until arrival at the graveside.

Funeral and Shiva Notices

English notices of the funeral and shiva and times of services at the shiva house are prepared by the committee and also appear on the Shul website. If the family wish to have Hebrew notices they can request this from the Chevra Kadisha at the time the funeral arrangements are being made or they can obtain such notices from Baruch Stern, 10 Avraham Shapiro Street, Netanya tel: 09 882 7664. Notices to appear in the Jerusalem Post should be sent to them by e-mail (ad@jpost.com) or by telephone 02 531 5689 or by fax 02 538 9527. The internet site address for the Jerusalem post is www.jpost.com/ads

Stone Setting

To make arrangements for a stone setting the contacts are myself, Alan or Yitzhak. The family should also contact the Rabbi to arrange a suitable time if his presence is required. The family should make sure that the wording for the tombstone is correct before the stone is prepared. The stonemason usually requires the family to sign off the approved wording before preparing the stone. The family should also be in touch with the stonemason to make certain that the stone is in position before the ceremony and, if possible, attend at the cemetery before the date of the stone setting to make sure that the stone is in order. English notices of the stone setting are prepared by the committee and also appear on the Shul website (<http://www.yinn.org>). Announcements are also made in Shul informing the members of the stone setting. A coach can be arranged by the committee if desired by the family. The cost of a coach for the stone setting is the same as on page 6. It is possible for the family to have a L'Chaim in the Shul hall after a stone setting

ceremony. Arrangements should be made with Sue Levy (Tel: 054 581 5125) who will advise as to the charge for the hall and the provision of refreshments.

Death Certificate

- The Misrad Ha'pnim (Ministry of Interior) normally send the certificate by post to the address of the family a month or so after the funeral. If required earlier a member of the family can obtain the certificate and certified copies from the Misrad Ha'pnim (2nd floor, Beit Remez, Remez Street, Netanya) a week or two after the shiva.
- The member of the family must take their Teuda Zehut with them.
- The certificate should be checked thoroughly at the time as there have been cases of mistakes which have had to be rectified later.
- One should ask for as many copies as it is anticipated may be required. Copies are provided free of charge.
- If one needs a copy of the certificate in English, a translation can be obtained:

(1) free from H.O.B in Netanya

(2) free from the American Embassy for American citizens

(3) from an attorney for a fee

Some countries e.g. The United Kingdom require to see the original certificate which they will then return.

Shiva Customs

Customs vary in different communities. Mourners should refer to the book of customs on death and mourning which we provide for each shiva.

I hope that this explanation will give members and their family the opportunity to discuss their wishes between themselves at their own convenience so as to be ready to make decisions when the time comes. This will avoid the pressure of having to decide at the time that the family is distressed from the loss of a loved one.

Members should know that the Committee is here to help with all arrangements at these unfortunate times. We try and remove as many anxieties as possible by supporting aveilim and their families from the time a death is reported up to the end of the shiva and again in connection with any stone-setting held locally. Our support services include arranging funeral times, sending a telemessage informing members of a funeral and shiva details, posting notices in the shul and on our website, and booking a coach if required. If any member would like me to visit them to discuss these matters, or speak to them over the telephone, please feel free to contact me.

I would like to thank everyone who assists the Committee in carrying out its work. I also acknowledge with thanks all the people who have assisted with their comments and suggestions and for the work they have done in the production of this booklet.

Eze Silas Chairman of the Chevra Kadisha Committee of the Shul

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