

IN TIME OF GRIEF

Introduction

Judaism embraces all of life and accepts death as a part of life. At the same time, Jewish tradition understands that we are never prepared to lose someone we love. In the face of death we are confronted by powerful emotions and questions to which we have no answers. That is when ritual shows its greatest strength. Judaism presents us with a highly structured series of procedures that can help us through our grief and ease us back into the rhythm of life with clearly demarcated stages of mourning. There is comfort and security in the knowledge that centuries of tradition lie behind each of these practices, as we do what our parents did before us and their parents before them.

Friends, family and community do their best to offer consolation at these painful times and their support is appreciated. Our temple family is also with you at this time. Jewish tradition meets this difficult moment with understanding, compassion and a pattern of laws and traditions which give you direction and guidance when the chaos of death may feel overwhelming.

What to Do When Death Occurs

The funeral and burial are held as soon after death as possible. Judaism considers it a dishonor to the deceased to delay burial unnecessarily. In addition, prolonging the burial subjects the bereaved to even greater strain and despair. When possible, the funeral is held early in the day, depending on the availability of the funeral home and the schedule of the rabbi, who should be contacted before the time is set.

There are instances in which the funeral can be delayed. Funerals are not held at the following times: on Shabbat; on the Festival Days of Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot; or on the High Holy Days. In special circumstances, or when family and friends have to travel great distances to attend the funeral, postponement is acceptable.

What is an Onen?

Upon the death of a loved one until the time of burial, each immediate relative (parent, spouse, child, or sibling) is referred to as an *onen* (fem. *onenet*), one who is saddened by grief. The *onen*, although in a state of shock and distress, is occupied with the immediacy of practical arrangements, some of which will require the advice and aid of the rabbi, funeral home, and sometimes hospital personnel. Family and friends must be notified of the death.

The *onan* generally does not receive condolence calls. The family of the deceased is allowed the privacy of grief. Close friends, however, may offer to help with funeral arrangements.

Because the mitzvah of caring for the dead is so important, the *onan* is freed of certain ritual obligations, such as prayer, recitation of blessings, or putting on tefillin. On Shabbat, however, many of the laws that pertain to the *onen* fall away. Shabbat observances are performed and synagogue services attended. Contact Rabbi Goldberg or Rabbi Siegal for more detailed information.

Funeral Homes

Please contact the temple office for the names and phone numbers of local funeral homes. For information on cemetery plots, contact Marsha Botkin, our Executive Director.

Selection of Casket

Judaism discourages ostentatious funerals. Loved ones are buried with simplicity and dignity. The traditional Jewish coffin is made of plain wood. It may have metal handles or nails, although Orthodox Jews use wooden-pegged caskets. Usually no worldly possessions are placed in the coffin with the deceased, although the bereaved sometimes choose to put a small token of love into the casket.

Simplicity is always to be encouraged. In Israel, for example, the deceased is wrapped only in linens and is buried directly in the ground. Bodily remains are returned to the earth as quickly as possible. (“For dust you are and to dust you shall return.” – Genesis 3:19)

All branches of Judaism discourage the viewing of the body other than for proper identification. We are encouraged to remember our beloved loved ones in the vibrancy of their lives.

What are the Preparations Before Burial?

Before the body is buried, it is washed in a ritual act of purification, called *taharah*. The cleansing is performed by the funeral director and staff, or the ritual of *taharah* may be carried out by a *Chevra Kadisha* (“holy society”). The *Chevra Kadisha* is a group of specially trained Jews who care for the body and prepare it for burial. Strict procedures are followed, which include the recitation of prayers and psalms. Men handle male bodies and women prepare female bodies; modesty is preserved even in death. If you are interested in this service, please contact the funeral home to make these arrangements.

In traditional Jewish practice, the deceased is not left alone from the time of death until burial. This ritual act of *shemirah* (“watching,” “guarding”) is performed as a sign of respect to the deceased. A *shomer* (“watcher”) may be hired to perform this service. If you are interested in this act, please contact the funeral home to make these arrangements.

In traditional Judaism, after the body is cleansed, it is dressed in shrouds (*tachrichim*). The shrouds are simple and plain and made of white cotton or linen. Some people are buried in their typical daily dress. Men are buried with a tallit over the shroud or suit. Women are sometimes buried in a tallit if it was their practice to wear one when praying. One of the fringes of the tallit is cut to show that it will no longer be used.

Home Preparation

Friends should prepare food for the mourners to eat upon returning from the cemetery. The meal after the funeral includes foods which are round, such as hard-boiled eggs or lentils. The circular shaped foods represent the cycle of life and the hope for a spiritual rebirth after our physical death. It is obligatory for the mourners to eat this meal, but Jewish law does not require the visitors at the house to eat, nor does it require the grieving family to provide food for guests.

In some homes, following more traditional practices, the mirrors in the house of mourning, particularly those in the rooms where shiva will be held, are covered. This is best understood as a means of avoiding a focus on oneself at a time of grief when we are reminded of our personal mortality.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE

Keriah (Tearing)

Keriah is the act of tearing one's clothes or cutting a black ribbon worn on one's clothes as an expression of grief and anger at the loss of a loved one.

Keriah is an ancient tradition. When our patriarch Jacob believed his son Joseph was dead, he tore his garments (Genesis 37:34). Also, in II Samuel 1:11 we are told that King David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and rent them upon hearing of the death of Saul and Jonathan. Job, too, in grieving for his children stood up and rent his clothes (Job 1:20).

Keriah is performed by the child, parent, spouse, and sibling of the deceased. It is usually done just prior to the start of the funeral service. It is always performed standing, which shows strength at a time of grief. A cut is made on the left side of the clothing, or black ribbon, for parents (over the heart), and on the right side for all other relatives. People sometimes choose to express deep feelings of grief by cutting on the left side for relatives other than their parents.

As the tear or cut is made, the family recites the following blessing which expresses faith in God's wisdom and judgment:

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam dayan ha'ernet.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, Judge of Truth.

The torn garment or ribbon is worn during the seven days of shiva (but not on Shabbat and Festival Days). Some people continue the practice for the thirty-day period of mourning.

The Liturgy of the Service

Jewish funerals are characterized by brevity and simplicity. They are designed for the honor and dignity of the deceased and are a part of the mourning process which helps comfort the bereaved. Generally most of the service takes place in the funeral home or cemetery chapel, or synagogue. (Synagogue services are limited to members of Temple Judea, the parent of a member, or the child of a member.) Sometimes the entire service is conducted at gravesite.

The bereaved family is seated in the front row of the chapel or synagogue. The closed coffin remains in view. Traditionally it is not decorated with flowers. Instead of sending flowers in the name of the deceased, a donation can be made to charity, frequently designated by the family of the deceased.

A brief introductory piece of music is sometimes played. This music is usually selected from the Jewish tradition and should be simple and not overly sentimental. The service may begin with one or more psalms. The psalm most commonly recited is Psalm 23. The rabbi will then proceed with several readings from Psalms or other inspirational sources.

The eulogy is most often delivered by the rabbi, who has met with the family prior to the funeral to learn about the deceased and the particular attributes the family would like mentioned. The eulogy will typically contain personal reminiscences and sometimes humorous anecdotes as well. Frequently members of the family will also speak, sharing personal thoughts about their loved one.

The final prayer of the funeral service is the *El Malei Rachamim* (Hebrew for “God, full of compassion”). (See “Hebrew Prayers” document.) At the close of the service, an announcement is made informing those present where and when shiva will be observed.

The Interment

It is a *mitzvah* to accompany the dead to the grave. At the conclusion of the chapel service, family and friends who will attend the burial service form a procession behind the hearse to the gravesite.

At the burial site, the casket is removed from the hearse and carried by the pallbearers to the grave, led by the rabbi. Usually at least six people (men or women) are needed to carry the casket, and it is considered to be a great honor. The Talmud illustrates the importance of the mitzvah when it says (Ketubbot 17a): “One must abandon the study of Torah to carry the dead [to their resting place].” It is also quite common for the coffin to be placed on a special cemetery wagon and wheeled to the gravesite.

During the procession Psalm 91 is sometimes recited. This beautiful psalm is also known as the “Song of the Spirit.” It expresses confidence that God will watch over us. Upon reaching the grave, a prayer called *Tzidduk Hadin* (Hebrew for “submission to Divine judgment”) is often recited. *Tzidduk Hadin* acknowledges God’s judgment and righteousness; it asks for God’s mercy, and it accepts the inevitability of death as a part of the Divine plan. *Tzidduk Hadin* is not recited when the somber theme of the prayer is incompatible with the spirit of certain holidays, such as Hanukkah and Purim. Another prayer is then substituted.

Kaddish is said by the mourners. (See “Hebrew Prayers” document.) *Kaddish* is a statement of faith that God’s world has meaning despite death. Through the *Kaddish*, mourners assert at the graveside that their lives must be rebuilt and that life has not lost meaning. The *Shiva* begins immediately following *Kaddish*.

The customs and practices surrounding the interment vary within each branch of Judaism. The coffin is lowered into the grave by hand or by mechanical device. The earth is shoveled onto the coffin. It is considered both a duty and an honor to help in filling the grave. As this is done, the shovel is usually not passed directly from one person to the next, but is placed on the ground before being picked up each time. This gesture symbolizes the hope that the tragedy of death will not pass from one person to another, and also symbolizes the desire not to rush this final parting from the deceased.

Some families prefer not to be present for the lowering of the coffin. They may wish to place several handfuls of earth on the coffin which is lowered after the mourners leave.

Upon leaving the cemetery, Jews traditionally form two lines and as the bereaved pass between them they recite the words, “May the Eternal comfort you among the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.” This custom marks the family’s transition into a state of formal mourning. The focus has changed from honoring the deceased to comforting the mourners.

Some people wash their hands upon leaving the cemetery as a symbol of purification after being in contact with the dead. This may also be done upon entering the house of mourning.

Kaddish

The prayer we call Kaddish (see Hebrew Prayers document) appears in every worship service. There are five variations of the basic Kaddish, one of which is the Mourner’s Kaddish. This prayer is one of the most beautiful in Judaism, and many find its words a comfort when they are sorrowful. The cadences are important for the bereaved even when the meaning of specific words may not be known.

The Kaddish is an ancient prose-poem that developed over a period of centuries. Among its earlier purposes was to divide parts of the service. With the exception of the last verse, which is in Hebrew, the Kaddish is written in Aramaic, the language spoken by our people in the time of Ezra in the fifth century B.C.E. and for many centuries thereafter.

“Kaddish” is an Aramaic word meaning “sanctification.” It is related to the Hebrew word *kadosh* (“holy”). Though most versions of the Kaddish contain no mention of death, the Kaddish came to be recited by mourners during the 13th century. It praises God, affirms God’s holiness, and anticipates the establishment of peace on earth. At the very moment when our faith may be most tested, we praise God, our Creator, and we pray for the unification and completion of a world we feel is fragmented.

The words of the Kaddish create a fellowship with others who have suffered loss. It is said in the presence of a public quorum of ten adults (*minyan*). When a parent dies, one recited Kaddish for eleven months. Many Jews say it for a full year, retaining the Talmudic custom of mourning. Kaddish is usually recited for a 30-day period for other close relatives – son, daughter, brother, sister, and spouse – although sometimes individuals choose to extend the Kaddish period beyond thirty days. Kaddish is also said each year on the anniversary of the death of a loved one (*yahrzeit*) and at Yizkor services.

Typically, mourners say Kaddish towards the end of the service. Traditionally only the mourners stand during Kaddish, taking three steps back at the last verse, which symbolizes the end of their audience with God, then three steps forward to their original position. In many congregations, all worshipers rise as a sign of respect to the memory of the departed. The entire congregation shows its support and solidarity with the mourners and its remembrance of the victims of the Holocaust who left no one behind to say Kaddish for them.

Reciting the Kaddish in memory of our beloved dead brings us all closer as our voices rhythmically echo all those who have mourned before us. In that moment we form a community which transcends death.

SHIVA

A period of mourning begins immediately after the burial. In Jewish law, this mourning process is divided into stages designed to ease the mourner back into the mainstream of life.

Shiva is the initial phase of deepest mourning, and in Orthodox tradition is observed for a seven-day period. Reform Jews have the option of observing *shiva* for three days or seven days. This intense period of mourning provides an opportunity for the close relatives of the deceased to begin the process of recovery by concentrating their grief. Relatives who sit shiva are those who have lost a parent, spouse, child, or sibling. They remain at home and receive visitors who come to express sympathy and love. The mourners are not left alone; they are surrounded by people who care and share their loss.

Jewish tradition considers a fraction of a day as a complete day. Therefore, the day of burial is counted as the first day of mourning even if interment takes place late in the afternoon. *Shiva* concludes on the seventh day shortly after sunrise. Shabbat is counted as one of the seven days, but there are no public signs of mourning. On Shabbat, ribbons or torn garments are not worn, and mourners attend synagogue services. The bereaved return to their formal state of mourning at home on Saturday night after Shabbat has ended.

Usually the shiva period ends on the morning of the seventh (or third) day after burial immediately following the morning prayer service (*Shacharit*). At that time, the mourners rise from their week of mourning. The timing and duration of mourning are affected by the holidays of Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur. The general rule is that these holidays cancel shiva.

Shiva is observed in the home of the deceased or at a close relative's house. Upon returning home from the cemetery, mourners and friends traditionally wash their hands enter the house, and a pitcher of water and a basin are set outside the door for this purpose. A special candle (generally provided by the funeral home) is lit upon returning from the cemetery and it burns for the entire shiva period. In Proverbs 20:27 we read: "The human soul is the light of God." The candlelight symbolizes the soul of the deceased as well as the presence of God. It is a sign of respect to the memory of the deceased.

The mourners eat a *meal of condolence* (in Hebrew, *seudat havra'ah*) when they return from the cemetery. It often includes hard-boiled eggs, the symbol of fertility and life, and bread, the staff of life in Judaism. This meal is usually provided by friends and neighbors. Jewish tradition considers the bringing of food to mourning friends and relatives a mitzvah and an expression of consolation. Throughout the shiva period, it is likely that friends will bring or send platters of food, which helps to free the mourners from some everyday concerns.

An integral part of shiva is the *condolence call*. It is a mitzvah to visit a house of mourning during the shiva period. The Talmud teaches that consoling mourners is an act of God (Sotah 14a). The purpose of the condolence call is to offer companionship to the mourners – to offer support and a sympathetic ear. When visiting a *shiva* house, let the mourners initiate the conversation. Let them choose what to talk about, or let them choose silence. Visitors may ask to hear stories about the person who died, or tell stories that would honor him or her. It is important to speak of the deceased. In this way, the bereaved recall the many events

which bound their lives to their loved one. The period of shiva allows mourners to express their grief openly and without restraint. Those who are bereaved need to grieve with the understanding and support of friends and family.

Daily prayer services are held in the home where shiva is being observed. These services take place in the presence of a minyan so that the mourners may recite Kaddish. The services may be held in the morning and/or evening for the period of the shiva. Prayer books for this purpose are available at the temple and will be brought to the house by the rabbi or the individual who will lead the service.

It is traditional for mourners to end the shiva period by taking a walk around the block to symbolize their return to a more normal life.

SHLOSHIM (The Month of Mourning)

The word *shloshim* means “thirty” and refers to the thirty-day period of mourning. The shloshim includes the seven days of shiva. The shloshim is the complete mourning period for everyone except for a parent. For a parent, the mourning period is eleven or twelve months. After the shiva, one gradually rebuilds one’s life. Some do, however, mourn longer than thirty days for relatives other than parents. The period of sheloshim is less restrictive than shiva. Mourners may return to work, but generally do not attend social gatherings or participate in festive events. Kaddish is recited daily at the mourners’ home or at the synagogue. Traditional Jews do not have haircuts or shave during this period.

As in shiva, the observance of shloshim is affected by Jewish holidays. Consult the rabbi if a Festival falls during these thirty days.

Those who sat shiva in a community other than their own (for example, where their parent lived) or whose shiva was very brief because of a Festival, may want to hold a minyan at their home to mark the end of sheloshim in order to receive the comfort of their community.

UNVEILING

“Unveiling” refers to the dedication of a tombstone and is often used to mark the end of the mourning period. Jewish law requires that a tombstone be placed on the grave of every Jew to mark the gravesite clearly and permanently. The memorial or tombstone may be erected at the end of shiva or up to twelve months after death.

The monument is usually selected soon after the funeral. It is simple and can be made of stone or metal. It may lie horizontally or be erected vertically. The inscription usually contains a short Hebrew phrase or a Jewish symbol, the Hebrew and English name of the deceased, and the Jewish and secular dates of birth and death.

It is customary in the United States to dedicate the tombstone in a graveside ceremony – the “unveiling.” This is the formal removal of a veil or other covering over the tombstone. It symbolizes the official erection of the monument. Immediate family and close friends usually attend the ceremony, which is accompanied by a brief service in memory of the person who

has died. The rabbi will usually officiate at this ceremony, although it is not required in Jewish tradition. Several Psalms are recited and a few words are spoken about the deceased. The cloth is removed, the *El Malei Rachamim* is chanted, and the Kaddish is recited.

Yahrzeit

“*Yartzeit*” marks the anniversary of a death. The word is derived from Yiddish and means “year’s time.” It is traditionally observed according to the Hebrew date of death, although some Jews follow the secular calendar.

Many Jews light a *yahrzeit* candle to commemorate the day. The candle is lit at sunset on the evening before the anniversary and is allowed to burn itself out. There are no standard prayers or prescribed blessings to accompany the lighting of the candle.

Kaddish is recited on the day of *yahrzeit* or on the Shabbat before *yahrzeit*. Before Kaddish, the rabbi reads the names of the deceased whose *yahrzeit* is observed during that week. If there is a memorial plaque, it will be lit in the sanctuary.

Many people visit the cemetery on or close to the *yahrzeit*, and perform the mitzvah of giving tzedakah or engage in other acts of special kindness at this time.

Visiting the Grave

Judaism discourages frequent grave visitation for it may hinder the mourner’s return to normal life. However, there are days when it is traditional to visit the cemetery, such as the days before the High Holy Days and special personal days such as birthdays and anniversaries.

Several blessings and Psalms may be recited at the graveside, including the memorial prayer, *El Malei Rachamim*.

Visitors to the grave often leave a small stone on the tombstone as a symbol of the enduring bond between the visitor and the deceased. It is an act of love; a gesture to show that you were there.

Yizkor

A memorial service, *Yizkor* (Hebrew for “may God remember”) is held in the temple on four occasions during the year - Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeret, and the last days of Pesah and Shavuot. *Yizkor* usually takes place in the morning after a Torah service. Many Jews light a memorial candle on the eve of days on which *Yizkor* is said.

Yizkor is recited beginning on the first holiday after the death. It is an opportunity for making contributions in the name of the deceased to perpetuate their memories and to promote the values they held.

REMEMBERING A LOVED ONE

Even though our loved ones have died, it is still important to remember and honor them, not just for ourselves, but for our children and grandchildren. We do so through ritual, (the recitation of Kaddish), emulation, (the cultivation of a value of traditions which was important to the deceased), and tzedakah.

In the Jewish tradition, one of the greatest honors one can bestow on someone is to perform a mitzvah on their behalf. Those who want to express their condolences to the family in a tangible way may perform the mitzvah of tzedakah. The most common form of tzedakah is to make a donation to a charity that was most meaningful to the departed.

Families may inscribe their loved one's name on a yahrzeit plaque in the Simon Memorial Garden. If you are interested in establishing this permanent memorial, please call the temple office.

PRAYERS, PSALMS, AND QUOTATIONS

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

There is a time for everything
A time for all things under heaven:
A time to be born and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to uproot,
A time to slay and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to wail and a time to dance,
A time to scatter and a time to gather,
A time to embrace and a time to shun embraces,
A time to seek and a time to lose,
A time to keep and a time to discard,
A time to tear and a time to sew,
A time for silence and a time for speech,
A time for love and a time for hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.

--Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains: what is the source of my help?
My help will come from Adonai,
Maker of heaven and earth.
God will not let your foot give way; your Protector will not slumber.
Behold, the Protector of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.
God is your Guardian,
God is your protection at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night,
God will guard you from all harm,
God will guard your soul, your going and coming, now and forever.

Psalm 23

The – DELETE God is my shepherd, I shall not want.
God makes me lie down in green pastures,
God leads me beside still waters and restores my soul.
You lead (delete s) me in right paths for the sake of Your Name.
Even when I walk in the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and staff - they comfort me.
You have set a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil, my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the God forever.

GIVE ME THE VISION

Shall I cry out in anger, O God,
Because Thy gifts are mine but for a while?

*Shall I be ungrateful for the moments of laughter,
The seasons of joy, the days of gladness and festivity,
When tears cloud my eyes and darken the world
And my heart is heavy within me?*

Shall I blot from mind the love
I have known and in which I have rejoiced
When a fate beyond my understanding takes from me
Friends and kin whom I have cherished, and leaves me
Bereft of shining presences that have lit my way
Through years of companionship and affection?

*Give me the vision, O God, to see and feel
That imbedded deep in each of Thy gifts
Is a core of eternity, undiminished and bright,
An eternity that survives the dread hours
of affliction and misery.*

Those I have loved, though now beyond my view,
Have given form and quality to my being.
They have led me into the wide universe
I continue to inhabit, and their presence
Is more vital to me than their absence.

What Thou givest, O Lord,
Thou takest not away,
And bounties once granted
Shed their radiance evermore.

--Rabbi Morris Adler

MEMORIAL PRAYER

Exalted God full of compassion, grant the fullness of Your peace to the soul of _____ who has gone to his (her) eternal rest. May he (she) share in the glory of the upright, the luster of whose purity is as the brightness of the firmament. His (Her) memory lives in the hearts of his (her) dear ones as an inspiration to deeds of charity and goodness. May he (she) be granted the bliss of eternal life. Shelter him (her) forever, merciful God, under the wings of your protecting live, and may his (her) soul be bound up in the bond of eternal life. God is his (her) possession. May he (she) rest in peace. Amen.

MOURNERS' KADDISH

Yitgadal v'yitkadash sh'mey raba, b'alma di v'ra khirutey, v'yamlikh malkhutey, b'hayey-khon, u-v'yomey-khon, u-v'hayey d'khol beyt yisrael, ba-agala u-viz'man kariv, v'imru amen.

Y'hey sh'mey raba m'varakh l'alam u-l'almeiy `alma-ya.

Yitbarakh v'yishtabah, v'yitpa'ar v'yitromam v'yitna'sey, V'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh v'yit-halal sh'mey d'kudsha, b'rih hu.

L'eyla min kol bir-khata v'shirata, tushb'hata v'ne-hemata, da-amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.

Y'hei sh'lama raba min sh'maya v'hayim aleynu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.

Oseh shalom bi-m'romav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol yisrael, v'imru amen.

Glorified and hallowed be the great name of God throughout the world which was created according to Diving will.

May the rule of peace be established speedily in our time, unto us and unto the entire household of Israel. Amen.

May God's great name be praised throughout all eternity.

Extolled and glorified, honored and adored, ever be the name of the Holy One. God is beyond the praises and hymns of glory which mortals offer throughout the world. Amen.

May there be a great heavenly peace and life unto us, unto all Israel. Amen.

May the One ordains the harmony of the universe bestow peace upon us and upon the whole house of Israel. Amen.

WE REMEMBER THEM

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.

In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them;

When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

--Rabbi Jack Riemer, Rabbi Sylvan Kamens

THE GIFT OF MEMORY

We thank Thee, O God of life and love,

For the resurrecting gift of memory

Which endows Thy children fashioned in Thine image

With the Godlike sovereign power

To give immortality through love.

Blessed be Thou, O God,

Who enablest Thy children to remember.

--Rabbi Morris Adler

This information is not meant to be an exhaustive explanation. It is meant to be of ready assistance to you in time of need. We hope that this purpose has been achieved. There are a number of excellent books which deal with death and mourning in Judaism. Contact the rabbi for suggestions.

Sources:

The Book of Jewish Sacred Practices: CLAL's Guide to Everyday & Holiday Rituals & Blessings, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001

The Jewish Mourner's Handbook, Behrman House, Inc., 1992

Syme, Daniel B. *The Jewish Home: A Guide for Jewish Living*, UAHC Press, 1988.