

Chodesh Report

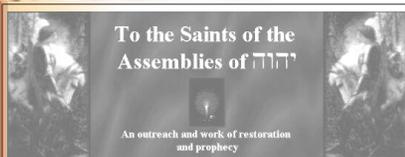
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Vital Topics: About Life and Death



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Who we are

The Chodesh Report is an open dialog of topical research by TTSAOY Chaplaincy and like-minded Associates.

This is a free monthly newsletter published by **To the Saints of the Assemblies of YHWH**.

To contact TTSAOY, e-mail us at: dwlaceyusa7@cox.net

Scriptural Allusions I

For the grave cannot praise thee, death can [not] celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth.
(Isa 38:18, KJV)

Part III - Death and Mourning

(Part 3 of 3)

The following contains excerpts from the TTSAOY publication of the *Nazarene-Hebrew Chaplaincy Manual* (2013) in outline form. In this book we cover the topic of funerals with advice for TTSAOY Affiliates regarding general instructions for the dying, matters to tend before, the funeral, and related procedures. We decided to include this as the final topic of our 3-part series on *Life and Death* intended as useful information to the general public. Such information is usually not shared among the brethren, however, we offer this information in hope that it may prove a useful resource and a helpful guide for those hard to make decisions for many of the scattered brethren finding themselves in such a time of need.

Just as we also recommend to all TTSAOY Affiliates, we include this disclaimer:

We do not intend to instruct an accepted practice but strongly recommend that the reader use this information as a guide and to make it their own by adapting the following to their own unique needs with

consideration of those for whom they offer this service.

Information used in this publication is listed in the *References* at the end of this article.

(Note: Those customs and traditions found to be added at a latter date than the Second Temple Era have been omitted, or have been validated as noted.)

Before Death Comes

(Estate Planning)

Most of us can make claims of life's blessings over our lifetimes. Except in a few of the most primitive cultures, it is a universal desire that we want to somehow preserve those things we were able to learn, to acquire, and those values that served to guide us along the way. Of our developmental stages over a lifetime, this has been called *generativity*. This strong desire to pass these things along to our families, friends, and others in some lasting way usually develops during middle age. The more elderly age group may even begin to consider it a duty and their legacy. The Hebrews felt the same in their place in time. The laws of inheritance in scripture reflect well the concerns of the elders and demonstrates their wisdom in matters of

implementation. Although many have no idea of such practices, the chaplain would do well to teach these Torah based financial principles to those making inquiry.

To help, Rabbi R. Wolfson, author of *The Funeral, or Levaya* (2005) offers these considerations for review as a guide to help one to accomplish these goals.

1. *An Ethical Will*

This is an opportunity to pass along one's life's experience in a usually intimate style narrative. One may include:

- The formative events in their life ...
- The world from which I came ...
- The people that most influenced my life ...
- Important lessons learned ...
- My definition of success ...
- Values that I cherish the most ...
- The things I want to ask forgiveness for ...
- I forgive you for ...
- How much I love you ... etc.

Organize what you want to say, then write it down. To personalize it, write as you would speak it – from the heart. An increasingly popular trend of modern society is to record an audio and/or video to accompany the written version. This method has also been utilized for the *Estate Instructions* and *Distribution*.

2. *A Living Will*¹

Since health-care laws differ state-to-state, it is wise to prepare a living will well in advance of affliction or infirmity. The concern here is that your particular beliefs and customs will not be violated by secular laws. A living will specifies many things among which are expressed: any limitations that you have regarding medical services, clear-cut authority of persons responsible allowed to make decisions in your stead should you become incapacitated, contact information, and providing legal documents stating these items. It is recommended that a living will should be discussed with close family and friends before completion.

A copy of your state's living will, also called an 'Advance Directive', is available online at:

<http://www.caringinfo.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3289>. Information can also be obtained from your primary care doctor, a public library, or county health department.

3. *Estate Instructions*

A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just (Prov 13:22, KJV).

Generativity - a sense that one is making a valuable contribution to society by bringing up children or mentoring younger people in some way (Boyd & Bee, 2006).

This is a matter of summing up one's accumulated wealth and what is to be done with it. The ramifications are certain without it ...

If there is a sole surviving spouse, he/she generally resumes responsibility of the estate ... and its debts.

Alternatively, the state liquidates all, pays off any/all debtors, and distributes the balance equally among the survivors – after covering all costs incurred by the courts and lawyers. Estate planning is most important regarding scriptural instructions.

The Torah is clear on matters of Laws of Inheritance. It is suggested to seek spiritual counsel for this process. The old adage that “Two heads are better than one” is a universal truth.

4. *Distribution of Personal Items*

To prevent agonizing and possible disputes, it is advisable to write out an inventory of important personal property for distribution and to whom to bequeath these items: jewelry, heir-looms, anything of sentimental value or otherwise. While the faithful commit to a lifetime of avoiding creating a stumbling-stone for others, we certainly do not want to unintentionally create one at our end. While there may be no perfect plan, this is intended to preclude the possibilities.

1 Beside a Living Will, medical treatment facilities require advanced Directions before treatment: Power of Attorney, statement of extent of treatment, and organ donation preferences, all of which vary state to state.

Funerals, or Levaya²

This section of the chapter answers to the 'practice' of burial of the deceased by first reviewing historical accounts of the early Hebrews during the second temple era* (515 BCE – 70 CE)³ and suggests a liturgical process for today based upon these findings.

Overview

Executed as criminals, neither John or Yahshua were buried according to "... *the manner of the Jews ...*" (John 19:40). According to Sanhedrin authority, not only were they denied proper mourning (Ant. 17.8.4 §200)⁴, neither could their bones have been removed to a place considered honorable (Semahot 13.7)⁵.

Then took they the body of Yahushua, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Yahushua ..." (John 19:40-41, RNKJV).

Was there a single liturgical practice during Yah'shua's time for death and burial? Archeology and historical accounts supporting scriptural references gives us sufficient evidence to assemble what "...*the manner of the Jews ...*" was during the second temple era. Nomadic people were frequently wrapped in linen and buried in pits covered with stones at their present locations. People of more permanent residences were often buried in basic wooden caskets and placed into a pit at burial sites located well outside of town borders [field or meadow site] (Baba Bathra 2:9)⁶.

Another custom of the early Torah observant Israelites was the custom of a second burial (Genesis 50:25; I Samuel 31:13). After a year had passed the remaining bones of the deceased were removed, placed into an ossuary, and transported to a permanent familial grave site – usually a carved sepulcher (2 King 13:21) or a cave (Gen 23:19). Archaeologist and researchers Jacobovici, S., & Pellegrino, C., authors of *The Jesus Family Tomb ...* (2007) explains,

The secondary burial ritual was common among the Jewish populations of Judea until the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. After this date, secondary

burials continued to be practiced until around the first half of the second century A.D. However, the custom of secondary burial lacked the centrality it had held in earlier times.

Whereas the later Talmud Bavli additionally records mitvah regarding reburial⁷, the earliest Mishnah⁸ is silent on this matter. Archeology and historical accounts scriptural references, however, will reveal this custom as a common practice.

It is from this culture, "... *the manner of the Jews ...*" (John 19:40), that we learn about 'the way' of early Hebrews customs that we here address in terms of *death and mourning*. In the following texts we present a liturgical model complete in its outline form. It is suggested, however, that the chaplain/minister customize this model to the unique needs, with the consent of the mourners, and most importantly use their model with great discretion and humility. Otherwise, please see the Contemporary (Western) Ceremony which follows.

Dying

Defiance and Acceptance

- no change can avert the inevitable
 - It is praiseworthy to fight off death with might
 - Yet is necessary
- Upon death, survivors recite
 - *Blessed is YHWH, Elohim of Israel, the true judge.*

Dying

- A person shall not be left alone
 - It is *mitzvah* (precept of religious duty) to be with her/him at the very end
 - a *shomer*⁹ will guard the deceased's body while reciting Psalms in private, and until burial
- There are no deathbed sacraments in the (*Nazarene-Hebrew*) faith
- One may say the *vidui*, a deathbed confession

I acknowledge before You, YHWH, my Elohim and Elohim of my forefathers, that my recovery and death are in Your hand. May it be Your will that

2 Levaya - [honoring the deceased by] "accompanying" [his/her bier to the grave]

3 Donin (1980) p. xxiii.

4 *The Works of Josephus*, Hendrickson Publishers Inc., p. 464

5 *Jesus and the Ossuaries*, Baylor University Press, p. 101

6 Mishnah Baba Bathra 2:9 - "... graves ... at least 50 cubits away from a town" (Neusener, 1988, p. 561).

7 The secondary burial ritual according to Mishnah ... (Berakhot 3.1.A; Demai 1.2.C; Maser Sheni 5.12.B; Pesachim 8.8.C; Yebamot 10.1.J; Nazir 6.5.II.F; Makkot 2.7.J)

8 Yeru'shalmi – or, Talmud Yerushalmi ... the original recordings of the oral law by the priests during Yashua's time (written post-destruction of the 2nd Era Temple, about 70-100 C.E.) revised and greatly amended by the later Pharisees and scholars of academia in Babylon around 200 C.E.. It is known today as the Babylonian Talmud.

9 *Shomer* – guard, a close friend or relative may serve as a shomer.

You heal me with total recovery, but, if I die, may my death be an atonement for all the errors, iniquities, and willful sins that I have erred, sinned, and transgressed before You. May You grant my share in the World to Come that is concealed for the righteous.

- Note: If the terminally ill is too weak or unable to recite the *vidui*, the *chaplain* should approach the family for their permission to recite it in their stead.
- It is considered a source of merit that one's last words be the *Sh'ma*.

The Shema

[Original Covenant]

Hear, O Israel: יהוה is our Elohim, יהוה is one: (Deut 6:4, ISR).

[Renewed Covenant]

*And Jesus answered him, "...,
Hear, O Israel; יהוה is our Elohim,
יהוה is one:" (Mark 12:29).*

Shema in liturgy, however, consists of three portions: [Deuteronomy 6:4–9](#), [11:13-21](#), and [Numbers 15:37–41](#).

The complete *Sh'ma*,

[Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#)

4 Hear, O Israel: יהוה is our Elohim, יהוה is one:

5 And thou shalt love יהוה thy Elohim with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

[Deuteronomy 11:13-21](#)

And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love יהוה your Elohim, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,

14 That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in

thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil.

15 And I will send grass in thy fields for thy cattle, that thou mayest eat and be full.

16 Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other elohim, and worship them;

17 And then יהוה's wrath be kindled against you, and he shut up the heaven, that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which יהוה giveth you.

18 Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes.

19 And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

20 And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates:

21 That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which יהוה sware unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.

[Numbers 15:37–41](#)

And יהוה spake unto Moses, saying,

38 Speak unto the children of Israel, and bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a ribband of blue:

39 And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of יהוה, and do them; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:

40 That ye may remember, and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your Elohim.

41 I am יהוה your Elohim, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your Elohim: I am יהוה your Elohim.

... (RNKJV, 1998).

- *Goses* – a person on the brink of death ... is considered to be still living, if:
 - Still breathing unaided
 - A heartbeat unaided

- Brain wave activity is not considered here. Should the breathing or heart beat cease if unaided, brain wave inactivity is also certain.
- [Gen 2:7; Lev 17:11](#))
- Any verbal instruction by the afflicted during *goses* is legally binding.
- Torah prohibits suicide
 - cannot be buried in Jewish cemetery
 - persons with bad health behaviors may fall into this category (smoking, compulsive eaters, substance abusers, etc.) so long as it is clearly the rebellious spirit of man sustaining the behavior and that it can be proven to shorten one's life-span.

Making Funeral Arrangements

Meet the Elder/Chaplain

In the absence of a local congregation, one of the first calls to be made is to a local elder, or a Chaplain. To quote David B. Plummer, Executive Director of Coalition of Spirit-filled Churches (CSC), “The chaplain is there to listen, care, and respond appropriately to the agenda of the client” (Plummer, 2000)¹⁰.

Upon contact, they will want to know much about the deceased and family usually starting with the story of the death. This procedure is for gathering the necessary information for the task. Common questions by the survivors may be both pragmatic and emotional in nature:

- What do we do now?
- What is his/her Hebrew name (if applies)?
 - Example: The given name of the bride is Mary Smith, her mother's maiden name was Jones. The Hebrew word for son is *ben*, for women, *dat*. The last names are listed in order as relation to father then to maiden mother's name and separated with *v'*. For Mary, a Hebrew introduction would sound like *Mary dat Smith v' Jones*, or Mary, the daughter of Smith (father) and Jones (mother)
- ... and why me? Why did this happen?

Elders and Chaplains are required to be prepared for any/all such questions. Remember that there are no quick answers for most questions. There will be ample time after the burial for counsel.

Mortuaries and Funeral Homes

In larger communities there are likely Jewish funeral homes. Services should include:

- Retrieval of the body from the place of death
- Preparing the body for burial

- Offering choice of caskets
- Transporting the body, and sometimes family, to the place of the funeral service
- Organize logistics of the burial
- Assist in conducting the funeral itself

Information that the family will need to present may include:

- Social Security number
- Any veteran's papers
- Hebrew name (if applies)
- Birthplace, parents, etc.

After this information is recorded, arrangements must be made.

- Does the deceased own any cemetery property?
 - If not, a plot¹¹ must be purchased
- Who officiates at the funeral?
- What time does the family want to have the funeral?
- Does the family want *tahara*¹² performed?
- Will there be flowers and music?¹³
- When and where will *shiva*¹⁴ be held?
- Who will be the casket bearers?
- What is the disposition of any jewelry or personal effects brought with the deceased?
- Who writes/proofs the obituary?
- When will the funeral home have the death certificate ready? How many copies will you need? (... one for every financial transaction necessary to settle the estate. Photocopies may suffice.)

Now, we are ready to address the customs and traditions of a Hebrew funeral in the order of events. The following includes excerpts from the book *Essential Judaism* (Robinson, 2000).

Burial

- 11 The plot ... is considered “hallowed ground.” It is called *beit olam* (an eternal home) and is consecrated in a special service (dedication) which demarcates an entire site – traditionally separated by a wall, fence, or hedge with its own entrance and exit.
- 12 *Tahara* – Is a unique *mitzvah* performed by staff of a Jewish mortuary, or by *hevra kadisha*, the holy society. Males are attended by men, women by women. Note: some smaller rural communities may not have the resources for this task at hand. Pre-preparations should be made with willing participants.
- 13 Flowers were not common at Naz-Heb funerals. Ancient priests and family members would often recite a dirge from the book of Psalms; therefore, appropriate music would be permitted.
- 14 *Shiva* – The seven days of mourning beginning with the day of burial. Joseph, upon his father Jacob's burial “... mourned with a great and very sore lamentation: and he made a mourning for his father seven days ([Gen 50:7-10, KJV](#)).

10 Plummer, D. B. (2000). *Just What Is Chaplaincy?*

Preparation for Burial

- Death is the final decree, the equalizer that returns all to dust.
 - Body is covered with sheet
 - Body is not to be left alone from now until burial
 - A *shomer/guard* will stay at its side, reading Psalms
 - Immediate family tear clothing (custom known as *k'riah/tearing*), or wear a torn black ribbon throughout the first seven days of the mourning period known as the *shivah*.
- Preparations
 - The holy society (*khevrach kadishah*) now enters
 - a burial society made up of volunteers (sometimes professionals) whose duty is to prepare the body for burial
 - Wash body in warm water, cut hair and nails, and wrapped in a white linen shroud. This shroud may be simple wrapping with spices and herbs (embalming is prohibited), or with the widely available shroud called a *takhrikhin*, white linen apparel sown by hand and consisting of a shirt, pants, a thin overcoat called a *kittel*, a head covering, a veil for women, a belt, and a large sheet.
 - Males may also be wrapped with their *tallit*¹⁵ with *tzitzit*¹⁶ cut off, signifying that corpse will no longer be bound to observe *mitzvot*¹⁷ (*optional tradition*).
 - Body must be buried in a casket in the USA, or usually carried on a *bier* throughout Palestine and the Near-East. (A redwood casket is common – polished or natural.)
 - Wooden with no metal nails, holes in side permit faster return to dust.

The Burial

- Dead must be buried within 24 hours. Dr. [and Rabbi] Ron Wolfson¹⁸, Professor of Education at American Jewish University, adds this insight,

15 *Tallit, tallis* ... a prayer shawl with a ritually knotted fringe at each corner; worn by Hebrews at prayer and events involving worship.

16 *Tzitzit* ... a fringe or tassel. The ritually knotted fringe at the corners of the tallis (Num 15:38; Mat 9:20).

17 In death, the person can no longer worship nor observe their religious duties (Psa 115:17).

18 Dr. Ron Wolfson is the Fingerhut Professor of Education at American Jewish University and the president of Synagogue 3000.

When Is the Funeral Held?

The burial should take place as soon as possible. The biblical injunction is to bury on the same day as the death. The rabbis of the Talmud considered a speedy burial to be among the most important ways to honor the deceased. They believed that final atonement¹⁹ depended in part on the body returning to the dust of the earth and did not want the process delayed. By the time of the Middle Ages, since embalming²⁰ was forbidden, it became a matter of hygiene and public safety that the body be buried expeditiously.

- Allowances may be made for relatives' travel time, or for prominent persons to accommodate large crowds.

Proper preparation for burial and the need to notify the community require the funeral be held the day after death at the earliest. In addition, further delays are allowed in the following special cases:

1. When close relatives must travel long distances to attend the funeral. As the Hebrew community has become more and more mobile, families have scattered all over the continent, indeed the globe. Even though airplanes can bring together families in a matter of hours, the funeral may have to be delayed a day or two to allow for such travel.

2. When *Shabbat* [Sabbath], the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and the *yom tov* [holiday] days of the pilgrimage festivals of Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot occur.

3. When a suitable casket or shrouds are not available.

4. When civil authorities require unavoidable postmortems,

19 Atonement - 1. Compensation for a wrong. 2. The act of atoning for sin or wrongdoing (especially appeasing a deity).

20 R. Sellers, (2002). *Historic Funeral Practices*.

documentation, etc.

Funerals are almost always held in daylight hours (although in Jerusalem, burials do take place at night). Times are chosen that are convenient for the family and for a maximum number of friends to attend. Preferred times seem to be near the lunch hour and late afternoon (Wolfson, 2005).

- Funeral/Burial services
 - Memorial prayers ... are often recited at graveside.

- Prayers: Temple funeral services:

Generally, a funeral begins with several readings about death from Hebrew sources. Psalm 23 with its famous verses, "Adonai is my Shepherd, I shall not want. God has me lie down in green pastures... God revives my soul for the sake of God's glory... Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no harm, for You are with me..." [Psalms 15, 24, 90, and 103](#) are also often recited. At the funeral of a woman, the *Eishet Chayil* [Woman of Valor] ([Proverbs 31](#)) is sometimes included. These readings offer comfort and reflection about the deceased and the survivors (Wolfson, 2005).

- [Psalms 23:2-6](#)

יהוה is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of יהוה for ever (RNKJV).

- [Psalms 24: 1-10](#)

The earth is YHVH's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods. Who shall ascend into the hill of YHVH? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from YHVH, and righteousness from the Elohim of his salvation. This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Elohim of Jacob. Selah. Lift up your head, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? YHVH strong and mighty, YHVH mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? YHVH of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.

- [Psalms 90:1-17](#)

YHVH, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art El. Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men. For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. Thou carriest them away as with a flood; they are as a sleep: in the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth. For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are

threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. Return, O YHVH, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants. O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of YHVH our Elohim be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

- **Psalms 103:1-22**

Bless YHVH, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless YHVH, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. YHVH executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. YHVH is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a

father pitieth his children, so YHVH pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of YHVH is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. YHVH hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Bless YHVH, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Bless ye YHVH, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure. Bless YHVH, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless YHVH, O my soul.

- Additional prayers

- At the funeral of a woman, the *Eishet Chayil* [Woman of Valor] (Proverbs 31) is sometimes included.

- Eulogies (The mitzvah of *hesped*, i.e., of eulogizing the deceased)

- An eulogy is usually performed by a family descendent, not immediate family, but a nephew, grandchild, or cousin.

- The mourners now exit through a gauntlet of attendees as they proceed to the limousine(s) that will carry them to grave-side.

- It is *mitzvah* (religious duty) to participate in a burial

- Casket bearers (pall-bearers) carry the casket to the limousine and from the limousine to grave-side
- Mourners should accompany the casket on foot part of the way into cemetery

- Prayers: Graveside:

- An adaptation from *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur* by R. Scherman (2005)

Yitzkor

Yahweh, what is man that you recognize him? The son of a frail mortal that You reckon with him?

Man is like a breath [hebel], his days are like a passing shadow. (1)

In the morning it blossoms and is rejuvenated, by evening it is cut down and brittle. (2)

According to the count of our days, so may You teach us; then we shall acquire a heart of wisdom. (3)

Safeguard the perfect and watch the upright, for the destiny of that man is peace. (4)

But Elohim will redeem my soul from the grip of the [Sheol], for He will take me! (Selah - pause) (5)

My flesh and my heart yearn – Rock of my heart, and my portion is YHWH, forever. (6)

Thus the dust returns to the ground as it was, and the spirit [breath of life] returns to Elohim who gave it. (7)

(1) Psa 144:3-4 (2) 90:6 (3) 90:12
(4) 37:37 (5) 49:15 (6) 73:26 (7) Ecc 12:7

- The Mourner's Kaddish (or, the Half Kaddish – 2nd Temple era version)

The climax of the service is when the mourners are asked to rise and recite the Mourner's Kaddish (sometimes a [modified] version... is said), the ancient prayer which reaffirms our belief in the greatness of YHWH, Elohim of Israel. Then, mourners and those in attendance are invited to fill the grave with earth. Since this practice is not universally observed, the chaplain/minster usually explains what is about to happen and the reasons why the community fulfills this ultimate *mitzvah* of burying the dead (see below) (Wolfson, 2005).

The [Mourner's] Kaddish

Magnified and sanctified be His great name in the World which He

created according to His will.

And may He establish His kingdom.

During your life and during your days, and during the life of all the house of Israel, speedily and in the near future, and say, Amen.

(Response: May His great Name be blessed forever and ever.)

Blessed, praised and glorified, exalted, extolled and honored, adored and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, blessed be He, beyond all blessings and hymns, praises and songs that are uttered in the world, and say Amen.

... (Donin, 1980).

Note: Additional lines were added during the Period of the Geonim, the heads of Talmudic academies (640 CE – 1038 CE), that did not exist during the 2nd Temple Era. It is cited here in its original integrity.

- [Optional] Each attendant place shovel full of dirt onto the casket after it has been lowered into grave
 - Place the shovel back into dirt for next person
 - Note: If this option is exercised, accommodations should be made for washing hands while leaving cemetery [hand wipes, towels, etc.]

- 1.1 After funeral, return to home of deceased for a meal - traditionally bread and a hard-boiled egg, chickpeas, and bagels – all symbolize fertility and renewal of life ... the continuation of the natural cycle.
- 1.2 Mourners are not expected to provide this meal, friends will do it for them.

Receptions

Immediately following the burial, the family of the deceased hosts a reception with modest traditional foods such as: boiled eggs, bread, and water. These items are in fact provided by extended family and members from one's congregation. The serving chaplain/minister is not obliged to attend this event. Of course, making oneself available as a resource of support is a matter of *mitvah* (religious duty). Friends of the family will bring dinner later after everyone has left except for mourners, family, and closest of friends.

Note: The discussion of remunerations at this time is NOT appropriate, however, if one desires to charge a fee for services be aware that they are dependent upon local cultural standards.

Mourning

- *Aninut* – From the time of death until the conclusion of the funeral.
 - This has been the time of making the funeral arrangements. There is little time for mourning, prayer services, and 'official' condolences. The focus is upon burial and necessities of the funeral.
 - An *onen* is one who is in *aninut* is exempt from wearing tefelin, reciting b'rakhot, even from praying ... and, may not engage in activities that give pleasure.
 - An *onen* experience shock and numbness, and may express anger, denial, and disbelief.
- *Aveilut* – seven days of shiva beginning at the conclusion of the funeral.
 - *Aveilut* consists of seven days of mourning
 - *Shivah* is suspended for Sabbath
 - *Shivah* ends on seventh day
 - It is customary for a friend come to mourners house, greet with a customary greeting, and to coax and escort the mourner outside of house for first time since the funeral
 - One such 'traditional' greeting to a mourner is: “*May the Almighty comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.*”
 - In Israel, mourners go to graveside the seventh day
 - The mourner may now begin to have feelings of sadness, relief, melancholy, comfort, happiness, when recalling memories of the deceased
- *Shloshim* – From the end of shiva, through thirty days
 - Mourning period continues for 30 days, a time of reduced restrictions no activities.
 - Mourning for spouses, children, etc, should officially end after the thirty days.
 - It is not unusual that mourning lasts up to a year for a parent. Beyond this, counseling may be needed if the mourner's behavior has not demonstrated sufficient emotional recovery
 - Common emotions may include loneliness, busyness, and waves of sadness
- *Shanah* – From the day of burial through eleven months
 - It is customary to privately recite Kaddish at prayer services within one's congregational place of meeting and to refrain from normal festival activities for this entire period of time
 - In Israel, it is customary to erect a tombstone at end of sheloshim. In America, it is custom to wait a full year.
 - At this time, a mourner's emotional state should demonstrate a gradual return to normal feelings, occasional twinges of sadness, recovering from grief, and a return of their sense of humor
- *Yahrtzeit* – is the anniversary of the day of death
 - *Yahrtzeit* is a Yiddish word meaning “time of the year.”
 - Is praiseworthy to take an *aliyah* (the honor of being called up to the reading desk in the congregation to read from the Torah) and say Kaddish at this time
 - ... and, also to light a candle that burns for 24 hours in the home as a memorial
 - There is no set liturgy for this personal observation, but it may include,
 - An eulogy or speech remembering the deceased
 - Scripture readings may include,
 - Recitation of [Psalms 23](#)
 - Prayers may include,
 - *El Maleh Rakhamim* (Ashkenazi - traditional prayer for the deceased²¹)
 - Unveiling and Yahrtzeit. The tombstone, that has been covered with white linen cloth all along, is uncovered at some point during this ceremony
 - ... and the Kaddish (see example above)
 - Prayers may also consist only of selections by the mourners
 - Mourners experience sadness at the memory of loss

Scriptural Allusions II

For in death [there is] no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks? (Ps 6:5, KJV)

21 Ashkenazi traditional prayer for the soul of the deceased – a doctrine not taught by Yah'shua ha Moshiack or His Apostles.

- *Yizkor* – Memorial prayers throughout the first year
 - Optional prayers at festival days in memorial of the deceased
 - Common emotional behavior at this time generally consists of sadness and memories upon recall of the deceased

About Afterlife

It is necessary here to note that, contrary to popular misconceptions, Hebrew thought does not altogether reject the idea of a conscious afterlife. The *Nazarene-Hebrew* faith, for example, accepts the scriptural teaching of mortal death as final (Ecc 9:5; Psa 6:5) but with the promise of resurrection at a later time (Mt 22:31; Ac 17:32; 23:6; 24:15,21; 1Co 15:12-13,21,42; Php 3:11; Heb 6:2).

H3463 |יָשָׁן| yashen (yaw-shane') adj.1. Sleepy [from H3462]

KJV: asleep, (one out of) sleep(-eth, -ing), slept.

Root(s): H3462 yashen Nvy yashen yaw-shane' a primitive root; properly, to be slack or languid, i.e. (by implication) sleep (figuratively, to die); also to grow old, stale or inveterate: -old (store), remain long, (make to) sleep.

... (Strong's Dictionary, 2001).

In comparison, mainstream religions believe in the simultaneous passage into some form of (spiritual) existence upon death. The bible, however, tells us that death itself is but a sleep lacking in any form of conscious awareness (Ps 13:3; Joh 11:13; Ps. 146:4). Mankind is only awakened back to consciousness at their appointed time of resurrection (Dan. 12:2, 1Thess. 4:13-16); furthermore, the scriptures tell us that YHWH gives to His righteous the sure hope of the resurrection of the dead from 'sleep' at a time that only He knows (1Cor 15:23-24; Mat 24:36).

“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan 12:2).

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The Data

Chodesh 11, January 2015

The new moon should be visible within the realm of Israel on **January 21, 2015** Jerusalem Standard Time [JST] at even-time [1][2][3].

The Data:

Sunset 5:02 PM (JST)
 Moonset 6:18 PM
 Age 0.5d/29 since last
 Illumination 1% (marginal)
 (5% Sep. 22 /30 since last)

[1] Lunisolcal V4.5 (Voeking, 2013)

[2] Ephemeris V2.0 (Sachs, 2000-2001)

[3] SkyViewCafe V5.8.6 (Shetline, 2000-2013)

Quotes

The mark of your ignorance is the depth of your belief in injustice and tragedy. What the caterpillar calls the end of the world, the Master calls the butterfly.
 ~Richard Bach

Yahweh's Feast Days of (2015)

-	Abib 1 (Starts @ sunset Mar 21)	Day 1 of the year	Mar 22
-	Yah'shua's Kiddush	Abib 13	Apr 3
-	Passover Memorial (at even)	Abib 14	Apr 4
I, II	Passover Feast (DUB)	Abib 15-21	Apr 5-11
-	Wave Sheaf	Abib 16	Apr 6
III	Feast of First Fruits (Pentecost)	Abib 16 + 49	May 25
IV	Feast of Trumpets	Day 1 of 7 th new moon	Sep 15
V	Atonement	Day 10	Sep 24
VI	Feast of Booths (FOT)	Day 15-21	Sep 29-Oct 5
VII	The Last (8th) Day	Day 22	Oct 6

The Lighter Side



*Because I could not stop for Death--
 He kindly stopped for me--
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves--
 And Immortality.*

*We slowly drove--He knew no haste
 And I had put away
 My labor and my leisure too,
 For His Civility--*

*We passed the School, where Children strove
 At Recess--in the Ring--
 We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain--
 We passed the Setting Sun--*

*Or rather--He passed us--
 The Dews drew quivering and chill--
 For only Gossamer, my Gown--
 My Tippet--only Tulle--*

*We paused before a House that seemed
 A Swelling of the Ground--
 The Roof was scarcely visible--
 The Cornice--in the Ground--*

*Since then--'tis Centuries--and yet
 Feels shorter than the Day
 I first surmised the Horses' Heads
 Were toward Eternity--*

~ Emily Dickinson



Notes

TTSOY
c/o: D Lacey
6801 W Kings Ave.
Peoria, AZ 85382

