BURIAL

BURIAL: WHERE

BURIAL: JEWISH CEMETERY

Jews Buried with Jews

Jews should be buried with Jews. It is permitted to disinter a body from a non-Jewish cemetery for reburial into a Jewish cemetery.

Non-Jew Not Buried in Jewish Cemetery

A non-Jew (including a non-Jewish spouse of a Jew) may not be buried in a Jewish cemetery.

Suicide

Someone who commits suicide may not be buried within 8 *amot* of other Jews in a Jewish cemetery. If the person had emotional problems, consult a *rabbi*.

BURIAL: ERETZ YISRAEL

Burial: Eretz Yisrael If Did Not Live There

You should not be buried in *Eretz Yisrael* if you could have lived in *Eretz Yisrael* but chose not to. If you could not live there or if you had a *heter* to not live there, it is OK to be buried there.

NOTE The reason to be buried in *Eretz Yisrael* is for Resurrection of the Dead (*techiyat ha'meitim*), which will only happen in *Eretz Yisrael*. But the entire world will eventually become *Eretz Yisrael*, so it is only an issue of time.

BURIAL: NEAR OFFSPRING

Children Visiting Cemetery

It is considered comforting to the parent's soul for children to visit the cemetery. So proximity to children may be a factor in choosing where to be buried (but who knows where offspring will end up living?).

BURIAL: WHEN

Same-Day or Delayed Burial

A body should be buried the same day as death occurs or as soon as possible afterward, but the burial may be delayed to allow relatives to arrive or for a body to be taken to *Eretz Yisrael* for burial.

BURIAL: COFFIN

Coffin Material

The coffin should be plain wood (usually pine) without any adornments or fancy features. It has holes in it.

BURIAL: SPECIFICS

Pall-Bearers

The pall-bearers usually pause seven times on their walk to the grave. On days when no *tachanun* is said, they walk directly to the grave without pausing.

Who Shovels

It is a *mitzva* but not a requirement for attendees to shovel some earth into the grave. Women should only do this if no men are present.

How To Shovel

Do not hand the shovel from person to person. Rather, stick the shovel in the ground. The next person takes it out, shovels some dirt, and sticks it back in the ground.

Depth of Coffin

The coffin should be buried with at least 12 inches of dirt above it.

BURIAL: KADDISH

Burial: Kaddish: Version of Kaddish

Kaddish is recited near the grave but at least 4 *amot* (7 feet) away from the nearest grave:

- If the son of the dead person is present and the burial occurred on a day when *tachanun* is normally said, the version of *kaddish* recited is the same as for a *siyum* (celebration of completing studying part of *mishnayot* or other holy books).
- If there is no son of the dead person present or if it is not a day when *tachanun* is said, then the version of *kaddish* recited is the normal mourner's *kaddish*.

Burial: Kaddish: Having Minyan

It is important, but not critical, to have a *minyan* at the gravesite so the mourner will be able to say *kaddish*.

Burial: Kaddish: Attending Minyan

It is a *mitzva* to attend the *minyan* at a burial, but no one needs to interrupt his day in order to do so.

BURIAL: LEAVING

Walking between Rows

All non-mourners stand in two rows on the way back from the grave. The mourners walk between the rows and are greeted with this phrase:
Ha'makom yinachem etchem b'toch she'ar aveilei tzion v'yerushalayim.
Then, the mourners remove any shoes which contain leather from their feet before walking between the rows of people. (Take other non-leather shoes to the cemetery so they can switch into them after the burial).

Stepping on Graves

For rules on how to treat graves, see Graves: Stepping on.

"Three-Times" Hand Washing

After leaving the cemetery, wash hands using the *Three-Times Method* without a blessing; see How To Wash Hands Using the *Three-Times Method*. You can take a container of water with you in your car.

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