



Yahrzeit at home

Congregation B'nai Tikvah- Beth Israel
115 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ
856-589-6550
info@cbtbi.org



Post-mourning observances include the unveiling, *Yizkor*, and *Yahrzeit*. Although many people wait one year for the unveiling, it may take place anytime after *shloshim*, during which period we are not to visit the cemetery. The monument may be put up after the first month and is usually dedicated in an unveiling service within the first year. The accompanying ceremony, usually attended by mourners and close family or friends, is brief, consisting of some psalms and readings, words about the deceased, the removal of the cloth covering the monument, hence the term “unveiling”, the prayer *El Malei Rachamim* and Kaddish. The unveiling is generally not a large affair resembling a second funeral, but does require a *minyan*.

🕯️ YIZKOR AND YAHRZEIT 🕯️

There are five times during the year that we say *Kaddish* in remembrance of the dead. There are *Yizkor* services on *Yom Kippur* and the last days of *Sukkot*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot* when we say *Kaddish*. In addition to attending the *Yizkor* service at the synagogue, a memorial candle should be lit on the eve of the holiday. Every year on the Hebrew anniversary of the death, a *Yahrzeit* candle is lit in the home. It is customary to attend evening services the night before and then the morning and afternoon services on the day of the *Yahrzeit* to recite the *Kaddish*. It is also appropriate to visit the grave at that time. Congregation B'nai Tikvah Beth Israel will remind you of the correct dates for your loved one's *Yahrzeit*.

🕯️ YAHRZEIT AT HOME 🕯️

It is customary to kindle a light on the eve of the *Yahrzeit* which is kept burning for twenty-four hours. This practice is linked with the thought expressed in Proverbs 20:27, “The spirit of a person is the lamp of the Lord.”

There is no traditional blessing associated with this lighting, however one may recite the following prayer, Psalm 23 or another prayer of one's own choosing or composition. Or one may light the candle in silence.

G-d, I am to kindle the *Yahrzeit* light in memory of _____. I am grateful for those who are alive this day and those whose souls are bound up in the bond of eternal life, those through whom my life has been enriched. I pray that I may demonstrate my gratefulness to them by acts of loving-kindness.

I give thanks for the years of life _____ did enjoy, for the companionship shared with him/her, for his/her gifts of hand and heart and mind which helped bring others happiness, for these and more which will endure in the tenderness of memory and as a hallowing influence.

Help me, G-d, to make memory into blessing. While accepting the inevitability of death, and affirming the possibility of an afterlife, help me be inspired by the memory to live today and every day with greater compassion, honesty, consecrating purpose, and gratitude.

After the kindling one may say:

(If departed was male)

“Zich-ro-no liv-ra-chah.”

(If departed was female)

“Zich-ronah liv-rachah.”

“May his/her memory be for a blessing.”