חברא קדישא

SACRED BURIAL COMMITTEE

קק בני יעקב

CONGREGATION B'NAI JACOB

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO, CANADA

5723 תשכ"ג

Chairman: Dr. Eugene Jeremias

Members: Messrs. H. Bogomolny, H. Muller, L. Stein, and A. Weisz

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FUNCTION OF ḤEVRA KADDISHA - - -

The occurrence of a death in a Jewish community obligates the entire community immediately to stop all work and to concentrate its entire effort on fulfilling the commandment of the Torah to complete respectful burial of the deceased without any delay. (Deut. 21:23, San. Chap.6, Mishnah 6, folio 46a and 46 b).

In order to discharge this pressing duty, the congregation has a permanent committee of members of the faith who have volunteered and dedicated themselves for this holy purpose, thereby releasing the rest of the community. Such a sacred committee is the Ḥevra Kaddisha.

The work of the Ḥevra Kaddisha is a very great Mitzvah calling for selfless devotion. Since very ancient times its activity has been termed Ḥesed Ve-emeth, being a true kindness to the dead. (Gen. 47:29)

To guide the Ḥevra Kaddisha of this congregation in the correct performance of its duties, a brief summary of rules is set forth below. It must be clearly understood that the sole authority for these rules is the Code of Jewish Law, as established from the Talmud, by RAMBAM (Yad Ḥazakah), by Rabainu Yaakov Ben Asher (Arba-ah Turim), and by Rabainu Yosef Karo (Shulḥan Arukh). Nothing shall be done contrary to the spirit of established Jewish tradition as set forth in these codes.

The function of the Ḥevra Kaddisha is therefore to carry out the procedure of sacred burial in accordance with this tradition.