

BAHÁ'Í BURIAL

Bahá'í Burial Law

"Briefly the law for the burial of the dead states that it is forbidden to carry the body for more than one hour's journey from the place of death; that the body should be wrapped in a shroud of silk or cotton, and on its finger should be placed a ring bearing inscription 'I came forth from God, and return unto Him, detached from all save Him, holding fast to His Name, the Merciful, the Compassionate'; and that the coffin should be of crystal, stone or hard fine wood.

Currently, the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Las Vegas only has cotton shrouds available, with the ring for \$100, less than the actual cost of the items. However, silk can be purchased from most fabric stores. We are aware of a website called Forlora.com that sells silk shrouds. **It is a personal business not promoted or sponsored by the Bahá'í institutions**

* It is not specified in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas as to who should wash and prepare the body for burial. If neither the family nor a member of the community is able or willing to do so, most funeral homes provide this is a usual and customary service. (Guidelines for Local Spiritual Assemblies, Chapter 13, p. 9)

It is important to understand the law of your State so that you can know the difference between what the law of your State is or *just the requirement of a particular funeral home or cemetery*. For example, there are currently **NO** laws within the United States that require embalming, even if burial is delayed. Most funeral homes have refrigeration, so the **body does not require embalming**.

It has been explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá and the guardian that this law **prohibits** cremation of the dead. The formal prayer and the ring are meant to be for those who have attained the age of maturity."

"He feels that, in view of what 'Abdu'l-Bahá has said **against cremation**, the believers should be strongly urged, as an act of faith, to make provisions against their remains being cremated.

“. . .regarding the inscription on a headstone, the beloved Guardian asked the believers **not** to use any form of the greatest name but a nine pointed star may be used. Or, you may wish to have an appropriate text from the sacred writings inscribed on the headstone. The position of the body in the grave should be with the feet pointing toward the Qiblah, which is Bahji in 'Akká'."

Bahá'í Funeral

Prayer for the Dead to be Recited by **One Believer**. "The Prayer for the dead is published in Prayers and Meditations of Bahá'u'lláh, No. CLXVII. It is the **only** Bahá'í obligatory prayer which is to be recited in congregation; **it is to be recited by one believer while all present stand**. There is no requirement to face the Qiblah when reciting this prayer."

If the dead be a woman, let the reader say: This is Thy handmaiden and the daughter of Thy handmaiden, etc. Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, CLXVII. Prayer for the Dead which is obligatory appears on page 260 of 'Prayers and Meditations'. This prayer allows for a change in gender. Other prayers for the dead are optional but if used they are to be used as revealed.