

After Jacob called his sons together and told them, "Assemble yourselves around me so I can tell you all what is going to happen to you in the last days. 2 "Gather together and listen, you children of Jacob. Listen to your father Israel."

**Jacob's Final Blessings of His 12 Sons
Genesis 49: 1&2**

Ethical Will

Your Name

What Is An Ethical Will?

Overview

If you get nothing more from this content, please hear what I'm about to say - **then do something about it.**

*"At that moment, their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to **COVER** themselves."* -Genesis 3:7

As you've heard, it said, *"It's not the crime - but the cover-up,"* and WE ALL LIVE AND COVER UP TO SOME DEGREE. Some at times and some, a large part of their lives, have been a cover-up.

As noted earlier, we are living longer. However, in this time of cognitively impaired conditions, the quality of that longevity has a bit to be desired. I have heard from families who had a loved one in a long-term care facility admit things that had devastated the family when they no longer had the cunning awareness to continue their cover-up. THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO BEGIN SPEAKING FROM THE HEART! FIND THE GUTS AND CLEAN YOUR SLATE - NOW - YOU MIGHT NOT BE IN THE LUCKY 10% TO DIE SUDDENLY. DO NOT COWARDLY INFLICT YOUR SECRETS ON YOUR LOVED ONES TO DEAL WITH.

An Ethical Will

Unlike a last will, which details how one's possessions will be distributed, **an Ethical Will (Hebrew: "Zava'ah") is a document designed to pass ethical values from one generation to the next.** Ethical wills are not new. Rabbis and Jewish laypeople have continued to write ethical wills during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In recent years, the practice has been more widely used by the general public. An Ethical Will is not a legal document, and it can take the form of a letter written to one's children and grandchildren, or it could be a longer document.

The Hebrew Bible first described ethical wills 3,000 years ago. Initially, ethical wills were transmitted orally. Over time, they evolved into written documents.

The following questions will assist you in drafting your own ethical will or personal statement. The purpose of these questions help you identify what is important in your life and what might be worth sharing with your family and friends.

Ponder the following questions.

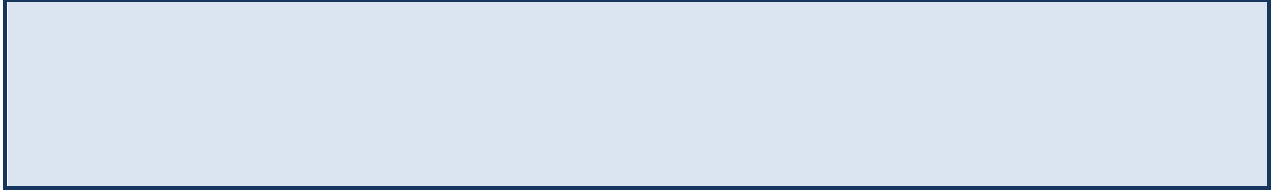
1. The day your mother/father and I married.

2. The day your children came into your life.

3. The family years.

4. The struggles.

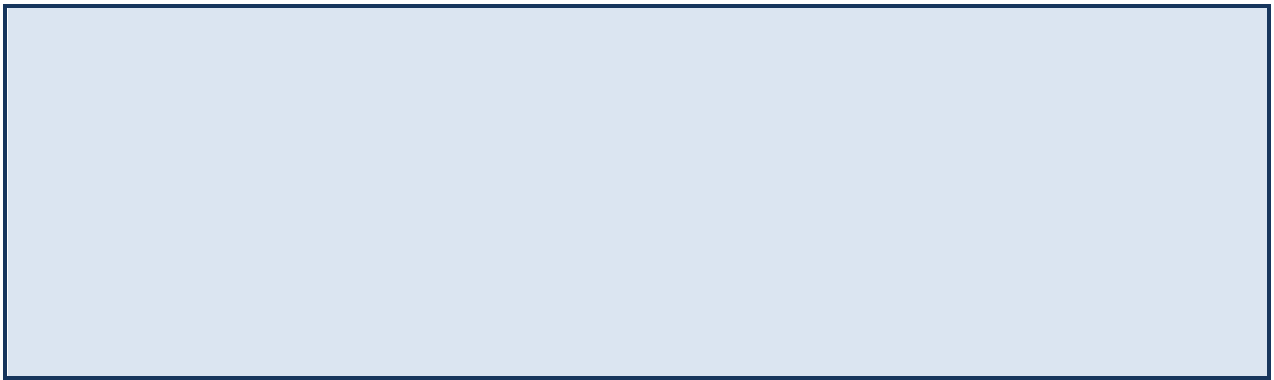
5. The joy.



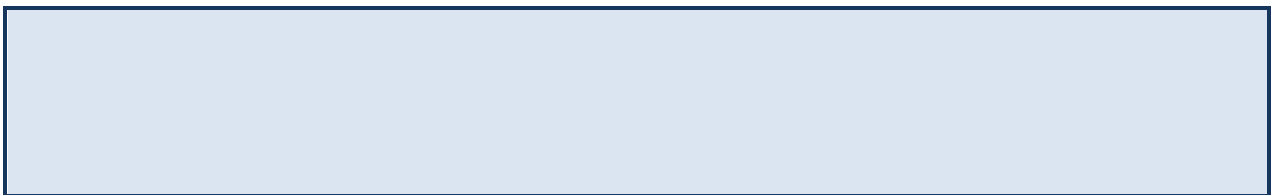
6. The day your children were married or took on religious orders.



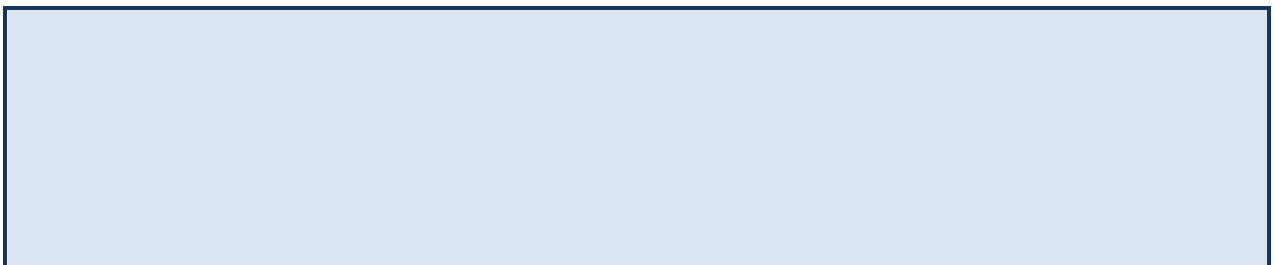
7. What are the five virtues you most value in life?



8. If you had two minutes to leave a note for your family, what would you write?



9. How would you like to be remembered?

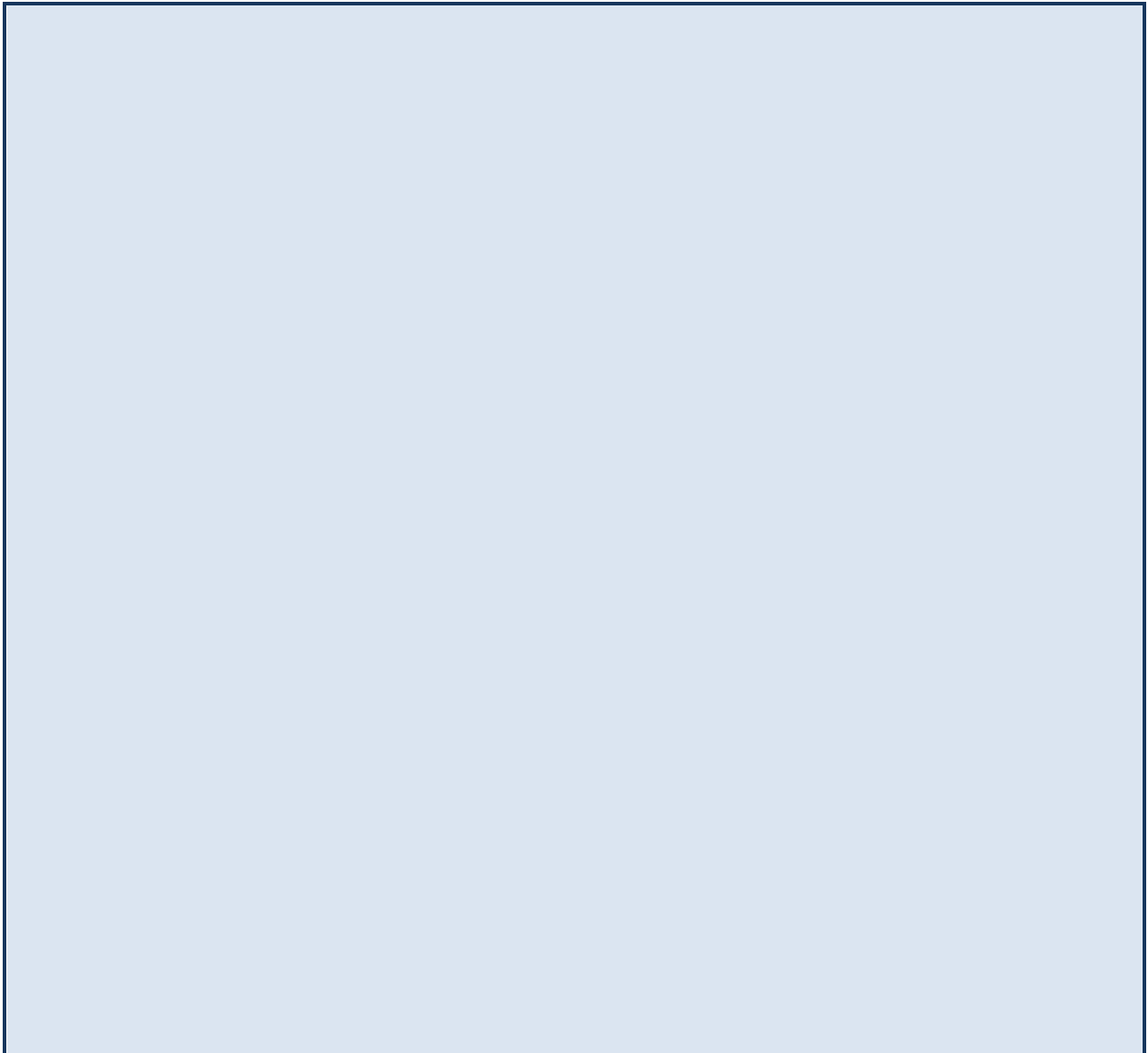


Conclusion

Today, ethical wills are being written by people at turning points and transitions in their lives and when facing challenging life situations. They are usually shared with family and community while the writer is still alive. Ethical wills may be one of the most cherished and meaningful gifts you can leave to your family and community.

Directions

Take your answers to the preceding questions and carry them over to the following pages. You will certainly have to expand upon your information as you draft your will.

A large, empty rectangular box with a light blue background and a dark blue border, intended for drafting a will.

