

Monday, 17th Adar, 5758

Opinion of Torah Sages

At our meeting today with our Master, Sephardic Chief-Rabbi, Supreme Halachic authority of our generation Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef, Professors Rabbi Avraham Steinberg, Rabbi Yigal Shafran and others, appeared before us. They presented a detailed and concise overview regarding the relevant tests performed nowadays to determine the time of death. And following further investigations, our Master (Rav Ovadiah Yosef) expressed his opinion, the opinion of the Torah, that according to the letter of the law, death is determined upon complete brain-death that includes [death of] the brain-stem and irreversible cessation of breathing.

This [verdict] being [applicable in practical terms] on condition that all proceedings be executed by trustworthy persons, who will set up a special committee that will include people proficient in Torah, who are also knowledgeable in this [medical] field, that will examine in great detail and with absolute certainty that all the necessary steps and relevant tests have been taken for this matter, with no exception.

[On the other hand] Our Master has also stipulated that explicit rights be given to any person or his family [to decide] that he not be disconnected from any equipment [such as a ventilator], nor any organ removed from his body, nor any act in this vein be done upon him, until heart activity has ceased entirely, and that their wishes be honored and followed strictly.

I hereby sign as a trustworthy witness [to the above] on the aforementioned date.

S.M. Amar