

## Maui Chevrah Kadisha Glossary of Mourning Terms (expanded)

**Aninut** אָנינוּת: Deep Sorrow; the time period between a loved one's death and their burial. A mourner during this period is referred to as an *onen* (oh-nehn).

**Anniversary of death:** It is a strong custom to light a 24-hour candle on the anniversary of the Hebrew date of a loved one's death. Some accompany this with a ceremony. Common references to this day are:

**Yahrzeit** יאַרצײַט (Yiddish for time of year); **Nachala** נַחְלָה (Hebrew for inheritance) ; **The Anyo/Anyos** (year(s) in Ladino); **Saal** (Persian for year) **Meldado** (also refers to a learning session held on the anniversary of the loved one's death in honor of the deceased.)

**Aron** אָרוֹן: casket/coffin (also used to refer to the cabinet where a Torah is stored).

**Avel (m)** אָבֵל / **Avela (f)** אַבְלָה : a bereaved person after burial has taken place. Plural Avelim(m) אַבְלִים / Avelot (f) אַבְלוֹת .

**Avelut** אַבְלוּת : mourning/ a state of being in bereavement. Also used to describe the period of mourning.

**Barukh Dayan HaEmet** בָּרוּךְ דַּיַן הָאֱמֶת : a statement traditionally said upon hearing of a passing (Blessed is the true judge).

**Hesed Shel Emet** חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת : use to describe the work of a chevra kadisha/holy society or the caretaking of a grave (the lovingkindness of truth).

**Hevrah Kadisha** חֶבְרַה קַדִּישָׁא : used to refer to a Jewish End of Life society (holy society).

**Comforting the mourner:** Phrases used traditionally by those offering comfort to a mourner or leaving the Shiva house. These phrases are generally said in the plural form even if only one mourner is present. One possible reason for this is that it is being said as a comfort for both the mourner and the deceased.

**Hamakom y'nahem etchem b'toch sh'ar avele tziyon ve'Yerushalayim**

הַמָּקוֹם יְנַחֵם אֶתְכֶם בְּתוֹךְ שְׂאֵר אַבְלֵי צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם: May Place/Divine console comfort you along with the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

***Min hashamayim tenuhamu*** מן השמים תנוחמו (or ***tenuchamu min haShamayim***): May you be comforted from Heaven

**May you suffer no more; or my condolences.**

***El Male Rahamim*** אל מלא רחמים : El/Power full of mercy; a prayer that originated in the Jewish communities of Western and Eastern Europe, for the departed and for the elevation of their soul. This beautiful prayer is sung/chanted at Jewish funerals or memorial services, upon visiting the graves of relatives (especially during at the unveiling of the tombstone or in the month of Elul), after having been called up to the reading of the Torah on the anniversary of the death of a close relative. In some Ashkenazi synagogues it is also sung in the Yizkor memorial service on Yom Kippur and on the last days of the Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

***Guf*** גוף: refers to a living body which clothes the soul

***Gufah*** גופה: refers to a corpse

***Goses(m)*** גוסס / ***Gosesset (f)*** גוססת : a rabbinic concept describing an individual whose death is imminent. Traditionally this has been defined as someone who will inevitably die within three days but this definition was never universally accepted and has little basis in traditional halakhic sources.

***Halvayah*** הלוייה: Funeral; also refers to the mitzvah of escorting or accompanying the dead to their final resting place/grave. Also referred to as Levayah לוייה (Yiddsh)

***Hashkavoth*** השקבות: Jewish memorial service for the dead (remembrance) in the Sephardic tradition. Prayers are generally recited on Yom Kippur for all those who've died during the past year. Considered to aid in the elevation and purification of the soul. See Yizkor.

***Heshbon Hanefesh*** השבון הנפש an accounting of the soul.

***Hesped*** הקסד: a speech/eulogy given in honor of the deceased usually at the funeral or burial. A hesped can also be given at other times throughout the first year of the passing in which case it is often referred to as an azkarah/ remembrance (a memorial offering).

***Kevurah*** קבורה: interment.

***K'vod HaMet*** קבודת המת: honoring the dead; respect for the body of the deceased. An extremely important tenant of chevra kadisha which commences at the moment of death.

**K'ri'ah קריעה**: a common mourning custom of tearing one's garment at the time of death or during a funeral to alleviate or express grief. Also referred to as Kortar Kriah. Ashenazim tend to do kriah at the beginning of the funeral while Sephardim generally rend their clothing at the end of the funeral. Sometimes a symbolic ribbon pinned to the shirt is preferred to be used by the bereaved.

**Met (m)/meta (f) מֵתָה / מֵתָ**: a dead body/deceased raiment. The term mitah/death can be applied to any living being (including animals) that experiences the separation of body and soul. Mitah is the conclusion of life.

**Mishmarah משמרה**: a special meal and study session at the end of the Shiva and/or at the end of the Shloshim.

**Mourners Kaddish - קדיש יתום Kaddish Yatom** (lit orphan's kaddish) : an Aramaic prayer recited in memory of the dead, although it makes no mention of death but rather exults Hashem (Mourner's Kaddish). This beautiful prayer is generally recited for the first time at interment, said daily during shiva, at the shloshim, and For those mourning a parent it is said daily throughout the mourning period.

**Neshamah נִשְׁמָה**: the level of soul that transcends death. One of the foundations of our faith is the belief in the immortality of the soul, and in life after death. In Hebrew, death is often referred to as Yetziat HaNeshama/the departure of the soul.

**Niftar נִפְטָר**: a deceased person - "niftar from the world" (Mishna Peah 8:9). The root of the word niftar is peh-tet-reish (exit). A person is niftar when she/he exits this world, like someone who exits one room to enter another. Niftar is also related to patur/exempt. When a person's soul leaves the body, then the body is exempt from all obligations.

**Nihum Avelim נִחֻם אַבְלִים / Nihumim נִחְמוּמִים**: comforting the mourners. Nichum Avelim is considered one of the most important acts of chesed/lovingkindness a Jew can perform.

**Onen אוֹנֵן** : a bereaved person before the burial; a state of utter grief from time of death to the burial. An Onen becomes an Avel אַבֵּל at the burial.

**Se'udat havra'ah סְעוּדַת הַבְּרָאָה**: the first meal after the burial of a loved one. (meal of condolence/consolation)

**Shurah/Nihum Avelim נִחְמוּמִים - שׁוּרָה**: Two lines formed by the community through which the mourners pass and receive comfort when leaving the cemetery.

**Shiv'ah** שִׁבְעָה: the seven day mourning period beginning at time of burial (Hebrew for "seven"). Also referred to as **Los siete** (Ladino for "seven"). Commonly used in the phrase, "sitting Shiva".

**Shiv'a Minyan** שִׁבְעָה מִינּוּן: a group of 10 adult Jews who assemble in the mourner's home so that they can recite the Mourner's Kaddish.

**Sh'loshim** שְׁלוֹשִׁים: the first 30 days of mourning including the seven-day Shiva counting the day of burial as first day (Shloshim is Hebrew for the number 30). Also referred to as **Korte de Mes** (the cutting/conclusion of the month in Ladino)

**Shomer** שׁוֹמֵר: someone who sits with the body before it is buried (Shomer: one who guards in Hebrew). One does shmira שְׁמִירָה, watching over the deceased.

**Shnem `asar hodesh** שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֹדֶשׁ (Hebrew- 12 months): the period of mourning for a parent. Some customs continue to say kaddish for the full 12 months, others take a break after 11 months then say kaddish again for three weeks and some stop after 11 months.

**Taharah** טְהָרָה: the ritual cleaning and preparation of a body performed by members of a *chevra kadisha* (see above) before the burial; purification ceremony.

**Tachrichim** תַּכְרִיכִים: shrouds patterned after the priestly vestments of the kohen gadol

**Unveiling/stone-setting:** A meaningful ceremony popularized in the late 19th century is the setting of a permanent and conspicuous grave marker following burial. Some communities hold the ceremony soon (even a week) after the burial. In Israel it is usually done after the shloshim. In the US it is most often done 11 months after the death, though traditions vary.

**Matzevah** מַצֵּבָה: Tombstone (Hebrew for "pillar", "statue", or "monument"): refers to either a grave marker or to a Matzavat Zikaron ceremony.

**Matzevat Zikaron** מַצֵּבַת זִכְרוֹן refers to the unveiling or stone-setting ceremony of the gravestone or grave marker.

**Vidui** וִדּוּי Confessional prayer traditionally said on the deathbed.

**Yizkor** יִזְכּוֹר : Jewish memorial service for the dead (remembrance) in the Ashkenazi tradition. A compilation of prayers, poems and psalms of remembrance generally said on Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeret (the holiday right after Sukkot, featuring the prayer for

rain), the last day of Pesach, and the second day of Shavuot. Considered to aid in the elevation and purification of the soul. See Hashkavoth.