

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Avel, Aveilim: Mourner, mourners

Bikkur Cholim: Visiting the sick.

Chevra Kadisha: The sacred society that undertakes the rituals of preparing (*taharah*) and guarding the deceased (*shmirah*), and, in some cases, is involved in comforting the dying as well as comforting the mourners.

Halacha: Jewish law

Hesped: A eulogy

Kavod HaMet: Honor or respect for the dead.

K'riah: The tearing or rending of a garment or cloth to signify the rip in the fabric of life with the loss of the deceased.

Kever: The grave

Levayah: To accompany, the word used for a Jewish funeral.

Meit, Meitah, Meiteh: The deceased person (male, female, non-binary)

Minhag: a Jewish custom

Nichum: Comfort, comforting

Sheloshim: Thirty, referring to the first thirty days following the funeral, including the time of the Shiva. This is the period of the most intense mourning, which then is understood to diminish slightly. After Shiva, the mourner(s) begin to re-integrate into the world around them, returning to work and leaving the home. During Sheloshim, the mourners also begin to pick up the customary tasks of life.

Shiva: Seven, meaning the seven days of intense mourning following the funeral and burial or final disposition. The mourners remain at home, and others come to visit them to offer comfort, and to provide opportunities for prayer.

Shmirah: The act of guarding and watching over the deceased from the time of death until burial or final disposition.

Shurot: Lines; refers to the lines formed at the cemetery to offer comfort to the mourners immediately at the conclusion of the funeral. The typical configuration is two lines facing each other, between which the mourners walk.

Taharah: Meaning “purification,” it is the ritual washing and dressing of the deceased’s body.

Tachrichim: Burial garments in which the deceased is clothed.

Yahrtzeit: Yiddish for anniversary.



Kavod v'Nichum

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