



DAILY LIVING - CLASS #25



THE GRIEVING PROCESS EXPLAINED.

BASED ON THE RESEARCH OF
RABBI DOV LEV

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that are available online.*

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Shiva

The parents, children, siblings and spouse of the deceased must “sit shiva”¹ A boy who is under age 13 and a girl under age 12 do not sit shiva.²

The shiva period begins immediately after the burial, irrespective of whether the mourner was present at the burial.³ Shiva continues until the morning of the seventh day.⁴ For example, if the body was interred on Tuesday afternoon, the shiva period ends the following Monday morning.

Although one may sit shiva wherever convenient, it is preferable to do so in the place that the departed lived or died.⁵

The mourner should not leave the home in which he is sitting shiva, unless it is for a necessity.⁶

A candle should be lit for the entire shiva period.⁷ All of the mirrors in the home should be covered during shiva, but uncovered for Shabbat.⁸

The first meal eaten by the mourners after the burial should be provided by others.⁹ It should include bread and hard boiled eggs or cooked beans.¹⁰



¹ Yoreh De'ah 374:4

² Yoreh De'ah 396:3

³ Yoreh De'ah 375:1 with Shach

⁴ Yoreh De'ah 395:1

⁵ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:1:19

⁶ Yoreh De'ah 393:2

⁷ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:4:1

⁸ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:4:5

⁹ Yoreh De'ah 378:1

¹⁰ Yoreh De'ah 378:9

During shiva, it is forbidden for the mourner to:

- greet anyone (even on the telephone)¹¹
- sit on a chair/bench that is 12 inches or more from the ground¹² except on Shabbat¹³
- bathe or shower for pleasure¹⁴
- apply cosmetics, perfumes, colognes and the like¹⁵
- take a haircut or shave facial hair¹⁶
- cut his nails¹⁷
- wear new clothing¹⁸ (even on Shabbat)¹⁹
- launder his clothing or have others clean them²⁰
- wear freshly laundered clothing,²¹ except on Shabbat²² (It is permitted to wear freshly laundered underwear and socks.)²³
- wear shoes that contain leather or suede²⁴ (unless worn for a health problem),²⁵ except on Shabbat²⁶
- wear jewelry, other than a wedding ring for a woman, except on Shabbat²⁷
- engage in intimate contact with one's spouse²⁸
- pick up unnecessarily or play with a child²⁹
- study Torah (other than topics dealing with mourning and other tragedies)³⁰
- conduct any business or labor³¹
- listen to music³²

¹¹ *Shu"t Rivovos Ephraim* 3:84

¹² *Yesodei S'machot* 7:5:4

¹³ Yoreh De'ah 400:1

¹⁴ Yoreh De'ah 381:1

¹⁵ Yoreh De'ah 381:6

¹⁶ Yoreh De'ah 390:1

¹⁷ Yoreh De'ah 390:7

¹⁸ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 389:3

¹⁹ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:9

²⁰ Yoreh De'ah 389:1,4

²¹ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 389:1

²² Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh De'ah 389:11)

²³ Pischei Teshuva 389:2

²⁴ Yoreh De'ah 382:1

²⁵ Shach (Yoreh De'ah 383:1)

²⁶ Yoreh De'ah 400:1

²⁷ *Shu"t Tzitz Eliezer* 1:73

²⁸ Yoreh De'ah 383:1

²⁹ Yoreh De'ah 381:1

³⁰ Yoreh De'ah 384:1-4

³¹ Yoreh De'ah 380:3-6

On Shabbat, all of the aforementioned restrictions apply except where otherwise noted.³³ The mourner should change his clothing for Shabbat but still not wear his finest garments or new clothing.³⁴ It is forbidden to attend a shalom zachor or a kiddush.³⁵

All of the laws of shiva terminate on erev Yom Tov if a Yom Tov occurs during shiva.³⁶

Consolation

Perhaps the most rehabilitating aspect of all the mourning customs is the consolation provided by others. When undergoing a tragedy, the last thing that a person wants to feel is that he is facing it alone. Tactful comforting helps the mourner to heal and to get on with life.

The goal of consoling is to get the mourner to come to terms with his loss. He has to appreciate that God, in His infinite wisdom, knows what is best for everyone and runs the world accordingly. It is important not to preach anything to the mourner, but rather to help him convey his own feeling of sadness while gently guiding them in the direction of this faith.

Do not attempt to console a mourner before the deceased is buried.³⁷ At such a time, nothing should impede his feelings and expressions of grief.

During the first three days of mourning, it is ideal for the mourner to weep.³⁸ This outburst of emotion is a healthy way of expressing anguish. Do not tell the mourner not to cry.

³² *Yesodei S'machot* 7:5:10

³³ *Yoreh De'ah* 400:1

³⁴ *Aruch HaShulchan* (*Yoreh De'ah* 389:11)

³⁵ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:5:14

³⁶ *Yoreh De'ah* 399:3

³⁷ *Talmud - Avot* 4:23

³⁸ *Yoreh De'ah* 394:1

In some circles, only relatives and very close friends console the mourner during the first days. This is not an absolute rule. If you feel that your presence will be comforting to the mourner (especially if he has few others to console him), you should visit him. Generally, consolation visits are not done on Shabbat or yom tov.³⁹

Sitting shiva can be very draining. It is ideal for the mourner (and his family) to establish set times for visitors to come. This schedule should be posted on the door and publicized to the neighbors, relatives and friends. It is typical for the mourner to take some private time to eat meals and rest. It is imperative that visitors respect the schedule. It may be a good idea for the door of the home to be left ajar during times that visitors are welcome and to close (and lock) the door during other times. When entering during visiting hours, it is not necessary to ring the bell. Visitor can just knock gently and walk in.

It is important to maintain the solemn milieu of the shiva home. It is forbidden to greet the mourner⁴⁰ by saying "hello," "good morning" or any other salutation.⁴¹

The most important thing to offer the mourner is sensitivity. If you are not sure if your comment to mourner will be well-received, it's best not to say it. Even sitting in silence can be very therapeutic to a bereaved mourner. In fact, one should not begin a conversation with the mourner unless he initiates it.⁴²

It is wrong to discuss peripheral things in the home of the mourner. Do not discuss the weather, the stock market or politics, unless he really needs a break from focusing on the deceased. If you know of any stories about the deceased that highlight his good deeds, this is the best time to relate them. It is also a good idea to gently encourage the mourner to speak about his beloved relative.

³⁹ *Gesher HaChaim* 10:5:3

⁴⁰ *Yoreh De'ah* 385:1

⁴¹ *Yoreh De'ah* 385:1

⁴² *Yoreh De'ah* 376:1

While expressing deep sadness is appropriate during mourning, a mourner should avoid feelings of guilt. The period of mourning is an opportunity to learn and grow from the life and death of the departed. It should not have a debilitating effect.

The mourner should not act as host or hostess to visitors. The visitors are coming as a show of support for the mourner, to offer encouragement and perhaps to assist the mourner in his needs. They should not be offered food or anything else. It is preferable (but not obligatory) that the mourner sit when being consoled during shiva.⁴³

If one of the mourners is male, all of the (weekday) prayers should be observed in the home with a minyan. If he can, the mourner should lead all the prayer services.⁴⁴ If possible, a Torah scroll should be brought to the home and left in a safe, respectable place.⁴⁵

You should offer your services to the mourner. Sometimes, mourners need meals prepared or someone to organize a minyan. The mourner may need someone to help with a few errands or to take care of young children in the home. But whatever you do, the key is sensitivity.

Do not overstay your welcome. If you perceive that your presence is not helpful to the mourner, make your visit a short one.

Upon completing a visit to a mourner, say:

הַמָּקוֹם יִנַּחֵם אֶתְכֶם	HaMâkom y'nacheim et'chem
בְּתוֹךְ שְׂאֵר אַבְלֵי	bi'toch sh'âr avay'lay
צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.	Tzion vee'Yerushâlayim

May the Omnipresent console you among
the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

⁴³ Shach (Yoreh De'ah 387:1); Yesodei S'machot 7:5:4

⁴⁴ Yoreh De'ah 376:4

⁴⁵ Mishnah Berurah 135:49

Shloshim

As the time period from the death continues, there is a gradually lessened intensity of mourning. At the conclusion of the shiva period (usually on the morning of the seventh day since burial), the shloshim (lit. thirty) period begins. This continues until the morning, 30 days after the burial.⁴⁶

During shloshim, it is forbidden to:

- bathe or shower for pleasure⁴⁷
- apply cosmetics, perfumes and colognes, except for a married women⁴⁸
- take a haircut or shave facial hair⁴⁹
- cut one's nails⁵⁰
- purchase (for oneself) or wear new Shabbat clothing⁵¹ (even on Shabbat)⁵²
- wear freshly laundered clothing⁵³ except on Shabbat. (It is permitted to wear freshly laundered underwear and socks.)⁵⁴
- purchase or rent a home, unless a significant loss would otherwise be incurred⁵⁵
- sit in or near one's usual seat in the synagogue⁵⁶
- listen to music⁵⁷
- attend any festive occasion or social gathering⁵⁸ including a wedding, bar mitzvah dinner, etc.⁵⁹

⁴⁶ Yoreh De'ah 395:1

⁴⁷ Yoreh De'ah 381:1

⁴⁸ Yoreh De'ah 381:6

⁴⁹ Yoreh De'ah 390:1

⁵⁰ Yoreh De'ah 390:7

⁵¹ Rema (Yoreh De'ah 389:3)

⁵² *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:9

⁵³ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 389:1

⁵⁴ *Pischei Teshuva* 389:2

⁵⁵ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:10

⁵⁶ Yoreh De'ah 393:2

⁵⁷ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:14

⁵⁸ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 391:2

⁵⁹ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:15

In all of the above, some exceptions are made for some special situations. A knowledgeable rabbi should be consulted.

All of the laws of shloshim terminate on erev Yom Tov if a Yom Tov occurs during shloshim.⁶⁰

At the conclusion of shloshim, all of the customs of mourning end. The exception is someone mourning the loss of a parent.⁶¹

It is wrong to mourn excessively.⁶² When the righteous pass away, we know that they are entering a better existence. The Talmud tells that a consequence of extreme mourning is that other tragedies will occur as a result.⁶³

A mourner must learn how to get on with life. He must develop techniques to maintain a happy, upbeat disposition while not forgetting the deceased. Although a widow must wait 92 days before remarrying⁶⁴ and a widower must wait until after Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot pass in any sequence,⁶⁵ subsequently, it is proper for them to remarry.⁶⁶ Unquestionably, this is what the departed would want most.

The Twelve Months

When one loses a parent, the loss is greatest. Even if the child did not share a close relationship with the deceased parent, the obligations of mourning apply. Deep down every child knows that his/her parent possessed endless love for the child, and even if some parenting

⁶⁰ Yoreh De'ah 399:3

⁶¹ Teenagers who need guidance in dealing with the loss of a family member are encouraged to read *Saying Goodbye* by Neal Goldberg and Miriam Liebermann [Targum Press]. General perspectives on how to deal with suffering can be found in *Yissurim: A Blessing in Disguise* by Leib Gershon Seligson [Targum Press], *Returning to Joy* by Rabbi Joshua Mark [Targum Press] and *Longing for Dawn* by Rabbi Yaakov Yisrael Baifus [Feldheim].

⁶² Yoreh De'ah 394:1

⁶³ Moed Katan 27b

⁶⁴ Shach (Yoreh De'ah 392:2)

⁶⁵ Yoreh De'ah 392:2

⁶⁶ See Shulchan Aruch Even Ha'ezer 1:8 and 1:13

mistakes were made and the relationship seemed severed, the parent-child bond is eternal. On the contrary, the mourning period is the ideal time to come to terms with the relationship, and often it is only after death that one appreciates a parent.

In remembrance of a departed parent, some elements of mourning continue for twelve months. Even during a leap year when an extra month is added to the calendar, the mourning lasts 12 months and not a year.⁶⁷

During the twelve months, it is forbidden to:

- purchase (for himself) or wear new Shabbat clothing⁶⁸ (even on Shabbat)⁶⁹
- purchase or rent a home, unless a significant loss would otherwise be incurred⁷⁰
- sit in or near one's usual seat in the synagogue⁷¹
- listen to music⁷²
- attend any festive occasion or social gathering⁷³ including a wedding, bar mitzvah dinner, etc.⁷⁴

In all of the above, some exceptions are made for some special situations. A knowledgeable rabbi should be consulted.

At the conclusion of the twelve months, all of the customs of mourning cease.

⁶⁷ Yoreh De'ah 391:2

⁶⁸ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 389:3

⁶⁹ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:9

⁷⁰ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:10

⁷¹ Yoreh De'ah 393:2

⁷² *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:14

⁷³ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 391:2

⁷⁴ *Yesodei S'machot* 8:2:15

Restrictions for a Mourner

<p>Aninut (before burial)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greeting other people • going to work • sitting on a regular chair [although sitting on a low chair is permitted] • eating meat or drinking wine • washing hands or face with warm water • taking a shower or bath • applying cosmetics, perfumes, etc. • take a haircut or shave • cutting nails • washing clothes • wearing fresh clothes • marital relations • praying or saying blessings • wearing tefillin • studying Torah, except laws of mourning • NOTE: During Shabbat and Yom Tov, only the restrictions of studying Torah and marital relations apply.
<p>Shiva (week after burial)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greeting other people • sitting on a chair higher than 12 inches from the ground (except on Shabbat) • bathing or showering for pleasure • applying cosmetics, perfumes, etc. • getting a haircut or shaving • cutting nails • wearing new clothing (even on Shabbat) • washing clothes (even by someone else) • wearing freshly laundered clothing. On Shabbat should not wear finest or new clothing. One may wear freshly laundered underwear/socks • wearing shoes that contain leather or suede unless worn for health (except on Shabbat) • wearing jewelry, other than a wedding ring for a woman (except on Shabbat) • intimate contact with one's spouse • picking up unnecessarily or playing with a child • studying Torah, other than topics of mourning • conducting any business or labor • listening to music • leaving the home, unless necessary • NOTE: Yom Tov will mark the early completion of the laws of Shiva.
<p>Shloshim (30 days)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bathing or showering for pleasure • applying cosmetics, perfumes, etc. (except a married women) • getting a haircut or shaving • cutting nails • purchasing (for oneself) or wearing new clothing • wearing freshly laundered clothing (except on Shabbat). (It is permitted to wear freshly laundered underwear and socks.) • purchasing or renting a home, unless a significant loss would otherwise be incurred • sitting in or near one's usual seat in the synagogue • listening to music • attending any festive occasion or social gathering • NOTE: Yom Tov will mark the early completion of the laws of Shloshim
<p>12 Months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchasing (for oneself) or wearing new clothing • purchasing or renting a home, unless a significant loss would otherwise be incurred • sitting in or near one's usual seat in the synagogue • listening to music • attending any festive occasion or social gathering

Kaddish⁷⁵

A story is recounted about Rabbi Akiva who met a man whose skin was as charred as coal. The man explained, "I am a corpse and as atonement for my transgressions I hew wood every day with which the angels burn me." The corpse then explained that if his son who would stand up in the congregation and recite Kaddish, he would be exonerated from this punishment.

Rabbi Akiva went and taught the orphan how to say Kaddish in public. Immediately thereafter, the deceased man appeared to Rabbi Akiva in a dream, to bless him for rescuing him.

The metaphysical impact of reciting Kaddish is incomprehensibly great. No matter what type of lifestyle the deceased lived, the declaration of Kaddish on his behalf is something he will eternally appreciate.

The theme of Kaddish is the proclamation that through all the changing conditions in the universe, the one thing that remains steadfast is God's undiminished grandeur. All the apparent shortcomings and deficiencies cannot prevent this goal from being attained. On the contrary, the tragedies that we experience are in some way an achievement of this objective.⁷⁶

Every male is obligated to say Kaddish in his parent's memory. Women do not say Kaddish.⁷⁷ (See "Daily Living - Women and Prayer" for an elucidation of this.) If there are no sons to say Kaddish, a different male family member should take it upon himself to do so. Otherwise,

⁷⁵ Additional information can be found in *Kaddish* [ArtScroll].

⁷⁶ *The World of Prayer* by Rabbi Dr. Elie Munk [Feldheim] pg. 184

⁷⁷ Pischei Teshuva (Yoreh De'ah 376:3)

someone should be appointed to say Kaddish. (However, mourner's Kaddish is not to be said by someone whose both parents are alive.⁷⁸)

Kaddish is said by sons for eleven months following the burial.⁷⁹ If others are saying Kaddish, they should do so for 12 months.⁸⁰ Whenever possible, the son should also lead the services,⁸¹ but not on Shabbat and holidays.⁸²

Kaddish is only recited in the presence of a minyan.⁸³ It is very important that the mourner does not ever miss praying with a minyan for the sake of reciting Kaddish. However, if he must travel on a business trip or some other very pressing need and will not be able to pray with a minyan, he is allowed to do so.⁸⁴ However, he should try to appoint someone else to say Kaddish in the interim.⁸⁵

Although the importance of reciting Kaddish is immeasurable, family and friends of the deceased can elevate the spiritual level of a soul by proceeding in the path of righteousness.⁸⁶ Their deeds testify that the deceased continues to be a source of inspiration in my life. This is a particularly powerful way for children to bring merit to their parents.⁸⁷

At certain times, a variant form, called Kaddish D'Rabanan, is recited.

⁷⁸ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:1:12

⁷⁹ Rema - *Yoreh De'ah* 376:4

⁸⁰ *Gesher HaChaim* 25:8:9. An alternative custom is to recite the Kaddish for 11 months and three weeks. See *Yesodei S'machot* 9:1:10

⁸¹ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:1:11

⁸² *Yesodei S'machot* 7:7:17

⁸³ *Orach Chaim* 55:1

⁸⁴ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:3:6

⁸⁵ *Darkei HaChaim* 33:11

⁸⁶ *Yalkut Yosef* 7:23:4

⁸⁷ *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 26:22

Mourner's Kaddish

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.	Yitgdal v'yit'kadash sh'may rabbâ.
בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ.	B'âlmâ dee v'râ chir'utay.
וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ,	v'yamlich malchutay,
בְּחַיִּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן,	b'cha'yey'chon, oov'yo'mey'chon,
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,	oov'chayay d'chol Beit Yisraêl,
בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב. וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.	ba'agâlâ u'vizman kâriv. V'imru: Âmein.
יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ	Y'hay sh'may rabbâ m'vârach
לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.	l'âlam ool'âli'may âli'mayâ.
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר	Yit'bârach v'yishtabach v'yit'pâ'ar
וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא	v'yit'romam v'yit'nasay
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל	v'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh v'yit'halâl
שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא.	sh'may d'kood'shâ b'reech hoo.
לְעֵלָא מִן כָּל	L'aylâ min kol
<i>from Rosh Hashana to Yom Kippur substitute</i>	
(לְעֵלָא וּלְעֵלָא מִכָּל)	(L'aylâ ulaylâ mikol)
בְּרַבְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא	birchâtâ v'shee'râtâ
תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמְתָּא,	toosh'bi'châtâ v'nechem'âtâ,
דְאִמְרוּן בְּעֵלְמָא. וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.	da'ameerân b'âlmâ. V'imru: Âmein.
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא	Y'hay sh'lâmâ rabbâ min sh'mayâ
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל.	v'chaim âleinu v'al kol Yisraêl.
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.	V'imru: Âmein.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמְרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה	Oseh shâlom bim'româv, Hoo ya'aseh
שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל.	shâlom âleinu v'al kol Yisraêl.
וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.	V'imru: Âmen.

May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel, swiftly and soon. Now respond: Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever. Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He, beyond any blessing and song, praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Now respond: Amen. May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life, upon us and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen. He Who makes peace in His heights, may He, in His compassion, make peace upon us, and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

Kaddish D'Rabanan

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא.
בְּעֻלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ. וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ,
בְּחַיִּיכוּן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוּן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל,
בְּעַגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב. וְאִמְרוּ אַמֵּן.
יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמִי וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.
יְתְבָרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל
שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא. לְעֻלְמָא מִן כָּל

from Rosh Hashana to Yom Kippur substitute

(לְעֻלְמָא וּלְעֻלְמֵי מִכּוֹל)
בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא,
דְאִמְרִין בְּעֻלְמָא. וְאִמְרוּ אַמֵּן.
עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל רַבְּנָן, וְעַל תַּלְמִידֵיהוֹן
וְעַל כָּל תַּלְמִידֵי תַלְמִידֵיהוֹן,
וְעַל כָּל מָאן דְעֵסְקִין בְּאוּרֵיתָא,
דִּי בְּאַתְרָא הָדִין וְדִי בְּכָל אַתְר וְאַתְר.
יְהִי לְהוֹן וּלְכוּן שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא,
חֲנֻנָא וְחֶסֶדָא וְרַחֲמִין, וְחַיִּין אַרְיִכִין,
וּמְזוּנֵי רְיֻחֵי, וּפְרָקָנָא, מִן קֳדָם אַבוּהוֹן
דִּי בְּשִׁמְיָא (וְאַרְעָא) וְאִמְרוּ אַמֵּן.
יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמֵיָא
וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאִמְרוּ אַמֵּן.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה
שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאִמְרוּ אַמֵּן.

Yitgdal v'yit'kadash sh'may rabbâ.
B'âlmâ dee v'râ chir'utay. v'yamlich malchutay,
b'cha'yey'chon, oov'yo'mey'chon, oov'chayay d'chol Beit Yisraël,
ba'agâlâ u'vizman kâriv. V'imru: Âmein.
Y'hay sh'may rabbâ m'vârach l'âlam ool'âli'may âli'mayâ.
Yit'bârach v'yishtabach v'yit'pâ'ar v'yit'romam v'yit'nasay
v'yit'hadar v'yit'aleh v'yit'halâl
sh'may d'kood'shâ b'reech hoo. L'aylâ min kol

(L'aylâ ulaylâ mikol)

birchâtâ v'shee'râtâ toosh'bi'châtâ v'nechem'âtâ,
da'ameerân b'âlmâ. V'imru: Âmein.
Al Yisraël v'al rabbâ'nân v'al talmiday'hone,
v'al kol talmiday talmiday'hone,
v'al kol mâ'an d'âs'kin b'oraitâ,
dee v'atrâ hâdain, v'dee v'chol atar va'atar.
Y'hay l'hone u'l'chone sh'lâmâ rabâ,
chi'nâ v'chisdâ v'rachamin, v'cha'vin arichin,
u'm'zonay r'veechay, u'furkânâ min kâdâm avu'hone
dee vee'shmayâ (v'arâ). V'imru: âmein.
Y'hay sh'lâmâ rabbâ min sh'mayâ
v'chaim âleinu v'al kol Yisraël. V'imru: Âmein.
Oseh shâlom bim'româv, Hoo ya'aseh
shâlom âleinu v'al kol Yisraël. V'imru: Âmen.

May His great Name grow exalted and sanctified in the world that He created as He willed. May He give reign to His kingship in your lifetimes and in your days, and in the lifetimes of the entire Family of Israel, swiftly and soon. Now respond: Amen. May His great Name be blessed forever and ever. Blessed, praised, glorified, exalted, extolled, mighty, upraised, and lauded be the Name of the Holy One, Blessed is He, beyond any blessing and song, praise and consolation that are uttered in the world. Now respond: Amen. Upon Israel, upon the teachers, their disciples and all of their disciples and upon all those who engage in the study of Torah, who are here or anywhere else; may they and you have abundant peace, grace, kindness, and mercy, long life, ample nourishment, and salvation from before their Father Who is in Heaven (and on earth). Now respond: Amen. May there be abundant peace from Heaven, and life, upon us and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen. He Who makes peace in His heights, may He, in His compassion, make peace upon us, and upon all Israel. Now respond: Amen.

Hakamat Matzeiva

It is an ancient Jewish practice to mark a burial place. When Jacob buried Rachel, God commanded him to mark the tomb with a monument.⁸⁸

It is unnecessary (and even not preferable) to invest in a particularly conspicuous gravestone. It is improper to build a mausoleum at the burial site.⁸⁹ The real memory of the deceased is preserved in the hearts and minds of the family and friends, who are inspired by the deceased to live an elevated lifestyle.⁹⁰

The tombstone should contain the Hebrew name of the deceased. Among Ashkenazim, the father's Hebrew first name is put as well.⁹¹ Among Sephardim, the custom is to put the mother's Hebrew first name. The Jewish date of death is also inscribed.⁹²

There are different customs as to when to erect the tombstone. In some communities, it is done as soon as possible.⁹³ Others wait to the end of the first year.⁹⁴ It should not be put in place on a day that eulogies may not be said, and not within 30 days before yom tov.⁹⁵

When the tombstone is erected, it is proper for relatives and friends of the deceased to gather⁹⁶ and recite Psalms, say kaddish (if there is a minyan present), eulogize the departed, and recite *El Malei Rachamim*.⁹⁷ The practice of "unveiling" the monument is not of Jewish origin.⁹⁸

⁸⁸ *Shu"t Igros Moshe* (Yoreh De'ah 5:57:1) based on Genesis 35:20

⁸⁹ *Shu"t Igros Moshe* (Yoreh De'ah 3:144)

⁹⁰ *Shu"t Igros Moshe* (Yoreh De'ah 5:57:6)

⁹¹ *Gesher HaChaim* 28:3:1

⁹² *Yesodei S'machot* 10:2:1

⁹³ *Shu"t Minchas Yitzchak* 4:107

⁹⁴ *Gesher HaChaim* (vol. I, pg. 304) in the name of Eliyahu Rabbah

⁹⁵ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:1:1

⁹⁶ *Shu"t Igros Moshe* (Yoreh De'ah 5:61:3)

⁹⁷ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:1:2

⁹⁸ *Yesodei S'machot* 10:1:4

Yahrtzeit

The commemoration observed on the anniversary of one's death is called in Yiddish, the yahrtzeit (lit. the annual time). A yahrtzeit only needs to be observed by the children of the deceased,⁹⁹ but one may observe it for other relatives as well, especially if the deceased had no children who will mark the day.¹⁰⁰

The yahrtzeit is generally observed on the Jewish anniversary of the day of death. (However, if the deceased was buried three or more days after his demise, the first yahrtzeit only is observed on the day of interment.)

Starting from the preceding evening, a candle should remain lit for the duration of the day. It should be allowed to burn itself out.¹⁰¹ (Of course, a candle may never be lit on Shabbat or yom tov.) If possible, one should visit the burial place on the yahrtzeit.¹⁰² It is customary for everyone to leave a pebble or some grass at the grave, as it is an honor for the deceased person to mark the fact that his grave had been visited.¹⁰³

On the day of the first yahrtzeit, all the restrictions of the 12 months apply¹⁰⁴ unless it was a leap year.¹⁰⁵ Some people are accustomed to fast on a yahrtzeit in the merit of the departed. However this should not be done on days when Tachanun is not recited.¹⁰⁶

On the day of a yahrtzeit, and on the preceding Shabbat, the son should be called to the Torah. If possible, he should also lead the Mussaf services.¹⁰⁷ In any case, he should recite Kaddish.¹⁰⁸

Charity and mitzvah observance are great ways to perpetuate the memory of the deceased. Donating books and other necessities to synagogues and yeshivas are excellent ways as well. Just imagine

⁹⁹ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 376:4

¹⁰⁰ *Yesodei S'machot* 12:1:1

¹⁰¹ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:3:13

¹⁰² *Gesher HaChaim* 35:5

¹⁰³ Ba'er Heitiv (Orach Chaim 224:8)

¹⁰⁴ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 395:3

¹⁰⁵ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:3:2

¹⁰⁶ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 402:12

¹⁰⁷ *Yesodei S'machot* 7:3:10-11

¹⁰⁸ Rema - Yoreh De'ah 402:12

every time someone prays from that siddur, that merit is accrued to the loved one in whose name it was donated.

Yizkor

For centuries, Ashkenazi Jewry has maintained the custom of recalling the souls of the departed and contributing charity in their memory. Yizkor provides merit to the disembodied souls, as the Almighty credits them with the merit of their relatives performing these mitzvot in their name.

Yizkor is recited four times a year: on Yom Kippur, Shmini Atzeret, the last day of Pesach and the last day of Shavuot.¹⁰⁹

Yizkor is recited on behalf of a deceased parent. Additionally, it may be recited for others who passed away.¹¹⁰ However, a person with two living parents may not recite Yizkor, and should leave the synagogue when Yizkor is said.¹¹¹

If there is no minyan available, Yizkor may be recited without a minyan.¹¹²

Before the day on which Yizkor will be said, those who will say it should light a candle in memory of the departed.¹¹³

Sephardic communities do not maintain the tradition of reciting Yizkor, but rather mention the deceased after being called up to the Torah.

Further Reading

- ***Remember My Soul*** by Lori Palatnik (Leviathan Press)
- ***If There is Anything I Can Do...*** by Rebecca Bram Feldbaum (Feldheim)

¹⁰⁹ *Gesher HaChaim* 31:2:4

¹¹⁰ *Yesodei S'machot* 11:2

¹¹¹ *Yesodei S'machot* 11:7

¹¹² *Yesodei S'machot* 11:3

¹¹³ *Gesher HaChaim* 31:2:5