DEATH
VOCABULARY

GEHINOM
KEVOD HAMET
TAHARAH
TACHRICHIM
CHEVRAH KADISHA
EL MALEI RACHAMIM
KERIAH
SHIVAH
SHELOSHIM
UNVEILING
YAHRIZEIT
KADDISH
YIZKOR
SEUDAT HAVRA'AH
MITZVAH
MINYAN
TZEDAKAH
SHEOL
GAN EDEN
Jewish Funeral Traditions

Jewish Rituals

Honoring the Dead While Helping the Living

The pain of death often does not end there. It takes time for those left behind to grieve, heal, and find comfort in their faith. Jewish traditions provide a way to honor the deceased and support those left behind. From the service at the funeral home to the meal that follows, each step is a way to mourn and celebrate the life of the loved one.

The dead are carried out of the house on a bier, draped in a shroud and placed on a bier. The bier is then placed in an open hearse and driven through the streets of the city. The mourners follow behind the hearse, singing traditional songs and prayers. The procession makes its way to the cemetery, where the bier is placed in the grave and covered with earth.

The days of mourning are the first three days after the funeral. During this time, it is customary to wear black and remain in mourning. It is also customary to refrain from eating meat and to avoid any activities that might be considered joyful.

The Shiva period lasts for seven days, during which time the family and friends gather to pray, share stories, and offer support. The family is expected to open their home to visitors and to wear black for the duration of the period.

The Kaddish is a prayer that is recited three times a day during the first year of mourning. It is a prayer for the deceased and is recited to remember their memory and to seek the comfort of God.

Jewish funeral traditions are a way to honor the deceased and to support those left behind. They are a way to remember the loved one and to find comfort in the knowledge that their memory will live on forever.
JANUARY (January) — WINTER

The breads of their lives are loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace.

For them, the living remember their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace. The deceased live on through their loved ones, and their loved ones find peace.
The Mourner's Path

Death

Aninut (No more than 72 hours)

Burial

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SHIVA</th>
<th>SHLOSHIM</th>
<th>PERIOD OF KADDISH</th>
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<td>7 DAYS</td>
<td>30 DAYS</td>
<td>UP TO 11 MONTHS</td>
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YARTZEIT 1 YEAR from death

YIZKOR - Yom Kippur, Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot
Kaddish isn’t — as so many name it — the prayer for the dead.

Kaddish is for those who survive after the loss of a loved one. It’s a script that we recite, proclaiming our faith, which we may not have at that moment.

But the hope is, by the end of our year of Kaddish, we will have regained our faith and reasserted our place in the community. That year is a training regimen, building our belief until we’re ready to relinquish our mourner’s status and rejoin the populace — scarred, but surviving.

My first Kaddish minyan was in my childhood home in New Jersey during shiva — no excuse not to go. Then, during the shloshim — the first thirty days of the mourning process — I continued, first in Los Angeles at Temple Beth Am, where I counted in the daily minyan and conveniently located between my home and my work, then in Jerusalem, finding a small Orthodox synagogue that was tolerant of women saying Kaddish (as long as men were also present and reciting it). Once, I remembered sitting alone in the women’s section at an Orthodox synagogue — it felt as if I were going blind. I took dark delight in the metaphor before realizing that they hadn’t bothered to turn on the lights in the women’s section.

My mother would have been simultaneously appalled and proud of the fact that I made it through a year of saying Kaddish, sometimes twice a day. I kept hearing her in my head, asking why I was spending so much time in shul. “Don’t do it on my account,” the voice said. “It’s not doing ME any good. Why don’t you go to the gym instead? That at least may do some good for someone.”
I wish I could have explained to her that going to minyan did do some good for someone. At a time in my life when I had to remind myself to move forward, it was a responsibility that got me out of bed in the morning, not just eventually, but early. I went not because it was always meaningful but because it was there.

**Sometimes, I could get through Kaddish, even the long one, without crying. Other times, the simplest of phrases would send me spiraling into sorrow. Sometimes, I was struck by the communal devotion of those who attended daily, even if they had not recently suffered a loss. Other times, I noted congregants muttering with little passion or projection.**

At the center of every minyan is the Amidah, the standing prayer, which begins with three steps back and then forward again. For me, that moment began to symbolize the back-and-forth of grief, starting as a setback before finding the path, paved by Jewish tradition and community, for moving forward again in small, tentative steps.

Sometimes, I could get through Kaddish, even the long one, without crying. Other times, the simplest of phrases would send me spiraling into sorrow. Sometimes, I was struck by the communal devotion of those who attended daily, even if they had not recently suffered a loss. Other times, I noted congregants muttering with little passion or projection.

But by surrounding myself with friends, family, and community, online and off, I found a grounding counterweight to life's definitional instability. Minyan provided an anchor, contextualizing personal loss and pain within the universal human experience.

Not every service resonated. Not every Kaddish helped me feel better. But the structure gave me a template for living and provided a connection to others whose hearts had at some point been cracked open by grief. They had grieved and survived; they once wept from the depths of their souls, but now show us all how to rediscover meaning and laughter after loss.

When we are low on strength, we can borrow against the collective, each withdrawal its own promise that, when our reserves are replenished, we will give back to those who support us — sharing embraces, tears, experiences and words. This privilege, this community covenant, is a miracle that I know my mother would have understood. Especially now that I've rejoined the gym.

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Immortality through Goodness and Activism
RABBI HAROLD M. SCHULWEIS

Jews Rarely Speak of Life After Death

You ask me what I believe about the afterlife, and I in turn am struck by the fact that yours is a question rarely asked by Jews. It is different with Christian audiences, where inquiries about the Jewish view of life after death are almost invariably the first questions posed. How is it that as a rabbi called upon to officiate at funerals, deliver eulogies, comfort the bereaved, I am rarely questioned about the disposition of the soul after death or the place of heaven or hell, or the belief in the physical resurrection of the dead? How is it that in the discussions about the meaning of the Holocaust and the destruction of one-third of our people, the Jewish position on the hereafter plays no part?

How do we account for this neglect despite the prevalence of the ideas of Gan Eden and Gehinnom (heaven and hell), olam haba (the world to come) in the rabbinic literature of the Talmud, in Jewish mysticism, and in medieval Jewish philosophy? Despite the praises of God’s “calling the dead to eternal life” in the daily prayer book and the references to paradise (Gan Eden) in the El Male prayer recited at the funeral and during Tikvah services, the afterlife does not function as a major Jewish belief among modern Jews.

Judaism Stresses This World

The this-worldliness in modern Judaism is not devoid of traditional Jewish roots. For one thing, the Five Books of Moses make no explicit references to another world beyond the grave. The Bible refers to the death of each of the patriarchs as his being “gathered to his kin” (Gen. 25:8; 35:29; 49:29, 33). One of the psalms recited in the festival Hallel prayers declares: “The dead cannot praise the Lord, nor any who go down into silence. But we [the living] will bless the Lord, now and forever. Hallelujah” (Psalm 115). Carrying out this theme, traditionalist Jews at the funeral cut the fringes of the prayer shawl that is placed around the shoulders of the deceased. That custom is explained as symbolizing the belief that the deceased have no mitzvot, no deeds to be fulfilled. To be alive is to have deeds to perform and imperatives to be followed.

Our Task Is to Fix This World

The emphasis in Judaism is on the exercise of human free will to mend the universe. The ambivalence toward otherworldly reward and punishment lies in the fear that it may be used to excuse lack of individual and social activism here and now. A story is told about a pious Jew who boasts to his rabbi that he had saved another Jew’s soul. A beggar had asked him for a meal, and he agreed but insisted that first they must pray the afternoon Mincha prayers. And before serving him the meal, he ordered the beggar to wash his hands and recite the appropriate blessing and thereafter to recite the Motzi prayer over the bread. The rabbi showed his annoyance with his pious disciple. “There are times, my son, when you must act as if there were no God.” The disciple, taken aback by this counsel, protested “How should I, a man of faith, act as if no God existed?” The rabbi replied, “When someone comes to you in need as this beggar came, act as if there were no God in the universe, as if you alone are in the world and that there is no one to help him except you yourself.” The disciple asked aloud, “And have I no responsibility for his soul?” The rabbi replied, “Take care of your soul and his body, not vice versa.”

The story expresses the apprehension that an exaggerated emphasis on spirituality, on God as provider and rewarder may paralyze the human spirit and rationalize passivity. So Moshe Leib of Sasov said that God created skepticism so that we “may not let the poor starve, putting them off with the joys of the next world or simply telling them to trust in God who will help them instead of supplying them with food.”

Belief in a Hereafter Causes Great Dilemmas

There are other factors that may account for the modernist distancing of otherworldliness. Jewish philosophers such as Saadia, for example, deal with the hereafter of persons in a literal and materialistic manner. Coping with the belief in the physical resurrection of the body, Saadia wonders what happens to the injured or amputated...
In Judaism, the extraordinary compassion on life in this world makes us realize the sacred: our responsibility to improve the world. The world is a place where the pangs of the people are experienced in their entirety. Therefore, the compassion that is to be extended to others is not simply a matter of solving problems but a reflection of the suffering of the whole world. To understand this, we must be open to everything that is happening around us.

In the context of this world, it is important to recognize the uniqueness of God. God is the creator, the source of all existence. In this world, there is no escape from the reality that we are part of a greater whole. This understanding of our position in the scheme of things is essential for our growth, both individually and as a society.

When I look at the world, I see a place where we are all connected. Even in the face of adversity, we can find strength in each other. This reminder of our shared humanity is a source of comfort and hope. It is through this understanding that we can work towards a better world, one where compassion and understanding are the guiding principles.
There is a parallel here to what we learned in history and the science of our world.

What is the source of this tradition and why does it matter? These are the questions that I would like to explore further.

In our minds, our hearts, and our hands—
Each of us has a unique perspective on life.

In the tradition of Judaism, we believe in the concept of the "Two Shields of Protection." These are the dimensions of faith and practice that form the foundation of our beliefs and actions. They serve as a reminder that we are not alone in our journey.

In sharing the wisdom of our ancestors, we honor their memory and continue the tradition of learning and teaching.

These are the values that guide us in our daily lives and shape our decisions.

On a personal level, let me restate the importance of transmission of tradition.

And in the broader context of our world, the tradition of wisdom and tradition of tradition is crucial.

In wisdom, tradition, and transmission, we find the connection to our past and our future.

The concept of the "Two Shields" serves as a reminder of our responsibility to preserve the wisdom of our ancestors and pass it on to future generations.

In conclusion, the tradition of Judaism is a living and enduring legacy that connects us to our past and inspires us to create a better future.

The importance of tradition cannot be overstated, as it provides us with a foundation upon which we can build a brighter tomorrow.
The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?