

## Hebrew Words Commonly Used in *Chevrah Kadisha* Work

Here is a list of some of the commonly employed Hebrew words associated with Jewish traditions around death and funerals. Many of these words may be found transliterated differently. (Some of these translations are only very rough approximations of complex concepts, e.g. *Taharah* or *Kavod*.)

- **Aninut (אנינה)** – The period of time between death and burial
- **Aron (ארון)** – Casket, coffin; usually simple wood
- **Avelut (אבלות)** – The period of ritual mourning after burial
- **Bikur Cholim (ביקור חולים)** – Visiting the sick
- **Chevrah Kadisha (חברה קדישה)** – “Holy Society”, the Jewish organization which cares for the dead.
- **El Malei Rachamim (אל מלא רחמים)** – “God Full of Mercy”, the prayer for the soul of the departed, recited at a graveside or a memorial service
- **Halachah (הלכה)** – Jewish law
- **Hesped (הספד)** – Eulogy
- **Kaddish Yotan (קדיש יותן)** – Mourner’s Prayer (literally “orphan’s” Kaddish)
- **Kavanah (כוונה)** – Holy intention
- **Kavod (כבוד)** – Honor or respect
- **Kriah (קריע)** – Tearing, the ritual of tearing one’s clothing when learning of a death, sometimes a ribbon is used.
- **Levayah (לוויה)** – Funeral, (literally “accompanying”)
- **Malakh Ha-Mavet (מלאך המות)** – The Angel of Death
- **Matzevah (מצבה)** – Headstone, (literally a “pillar”)
- **Met (מת), Metah (f) Metim (pl)** – Deceased person
- **Met Mitzvah (מת מצוה)** – Abandoned body
- **Minhag (מנהג)** – Local custom
- **Nechamah (נחום)** – Comforting mourners and families, showing kindness
- **Neshamah (נשמה)** – Soul, breath
- **Nefesh (נפש)** – Soul, breath
- **Niftar (נפטר)** – Deceased person
- **Rechitzah (רחיצת)** – Washing

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- **Rosh (ראש), Roshah** (f) – Leader, (literally “head”)
- **Ruach (רוח)** – Soul, wind
- **Shivah (שבוע)** – Seven days of mourning following burial. (Literally, the number “7”.)
- **Shloshim (שלושים)** – Thirty days of mourning following burial. (Literally, the number “30”.)
- **Shmirah (שמירה)** – Watching or guarding the dead between death and burial
- **Shomer (שומר), Shomeret** (f), **Shomrim** (pl) – A “guard”, someone who accompanies the dead between death and burial
- **Tachrichim (תכריכים)** – Burial garments
- **Tahor (טהור)** – Pure; spiritually vulnerable
- **Taharah (טהרה)** – The ritual of preparing a body for burial. Specifically, the ritual pouring of purifying water
- **Tamei (טמא)** – Impure; spiritually invulnerable
- **Vidui (וידוי)** – Confession
- **Yahrzeit (יארצייט)** – The anniversary of a death. (Literally, “year time” in Yiddish)