



Yahrzeit and Yizkor

What is a Yahrzeit?

A Yahrzeit marks the anniversary of the passing of a loved one. The day holds special significance to the family and friends who come together to remember the life and legacy of the departed. The Yahrzeit also marks a period in which mitzvot (positive deeds) carried out on that day are hugely beneficial to the soul of the departed.

Below are some of the customs which are followed during the Yahrzeit period.

The family will light a Yahrzeit candle at the beginning of the Yahrzeit (this begins at night) It should stay alight for 24 hours.

Family and friends visit the grave of their loved one where psalms (tehillim) and the mourners kaddish prayer are recited. (In order to recite the Kaddish, a minyan of 10 men is required.)

A call up to the Torah (aliyah) is arranged for a male mourner if the Yahrzeit falls on either a Monday, Thursday or Shabbat. The Rabbi will also say a short prayer for the departed.

On the day of the Yahrzeit, a male relative of the deceased will usually lead one of the prayer services (if he is able to do so).

At shul on the day of the Yahrzeit, the family can provide some refreshments to make a L'Chaim and the Rabbi or family member will sometimes give a short D'var Torah in memory of their loved one.

On Shabbat, a family may wish to sponsor the Kiddush or Seuda Shelishit in memory of their loved one.

The Yahrzeit is one in which we reflect on the lives of our loved ones and the legacy they left, and through good deeds and learning Torah we can help to uplift the spirit of the departed.

If you wish to know when your Yahrzeit will be, either contact the synagogue of which you are a member or contact the Burial Society, on office@usburial.org.uk [1] or by calling **020 8950 7767 option 1**.

Yizkor

Yizkor is a short prayer recited four times a year during the Jewish festivals of Yom Kippur, Shemini Atzeret, 8th Day Pesach and 2nd Day Shavuot. Yizkor means to 'remember' and is a way for a relative of the deceased to make a personal request of God, that in return for an act of charity, God will uplift the soul of the relative in the spiritual world.

This helps to strengthen the connection between the deceased and their relatives who carry out these positive acts. This benefit their dearly departed and also improve their actions in this world.

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[1] <mailto:office@usburial.org.uk>