

GLOSSARY OF YIDDISH AND HEBREW

A

Admor: Hebrew initials for: Adonenu Morenu VeRabenu (Our master, Our teacher our Rabbi). This is a title commonly used with Chassidic Rebbes. Admor of Ger, Admor of Satmer etc.

Akeida:

1. Hebrew literally 'binding' Refers to the binding of Yitzchok on the altar.
2. Jewish scholarly book dealing with the fundamentals of the Jewish religion

al Kiddish HaShem: Heb. for the sanctification of HaShem. Refers to someone who is killed for being a Jew.

Alsheich: Jewish Biblical commentator Rabbi Moshe Al Sheich

Am HaAretz: Hebrew means 'people of the land' and refers to those who are ignorant of the Torah.

Amidah: Refers to the main silent prayer said standing

Amora(Amoraim): Rabbis of the period of the Mishnah

Amorah: Biblical city filled with wicked people

Anshei Knesses HaGadolah: Hebrew for Men of the great assembly.

Apikorsim: Heretics who reject the teachings of the Rabbis

Ari Z'L: Hebrew initials of the words: Adoni Rabbenu Yitzchok Zechorono LeVaracha our master Rabbi Yitzchok. Better known as Yitzchok Luria the great 16th century Kabbalist

Aron Kodesh: Hebrew for 'the holy ark' place in the synagogue where the Torah scrolls are kept.

avodah: Hebrew word meaning 'service'. Refers to any type of service to HaShem

Avraham Aveinu: Hebrew name of Abraham

B

Baal Shem Tov: Founder of the Chassidic movement

Baal Tshuva (Baalei Tshuva): Hebrew for someone who is a repentant sinner.

Baal(es) Tzaddakah: Hebrew word meaning a philanthropist

Bamidbar: Fourth book of the Torah. Called in English "Numbers"

Bava Basra: Tractate of the Talmud

Bava Kama: Tractate of the Talmud

bechina(bechinos): a subdivision of an *Inyan. Every Inyan has many bechinos.

Beis HaKnesses: Jewish house of worship

Beis HaMedrash: Jewish house of study

Beis HaMikdash: Heb. The Holy Temple

Beis Midrash: Jewish house of study

Bereishis: First book of the Torah. Called Genesis in English

Betza: Tractate of the Talmud

Brachos: Tractate of the talmud

bris: Hebrew for circumcision

bucharim: Hebrew/Yiddish for young men who are learning in a Yeshiva

C

caftan: Type of long garment worn by Chasidim

Chas V'Shalom: Hebrew for 'G-d forbid'

Chasid: Hebrew for a 'pious person'

chason: Hebrew/Yiddish for a man who is engaged to be married

Chazal: Hebrew initials for: Chochmenu Zichrona Levaracha (Our sages of Blessed memory) Used to refer to Rabbis of the Talmud

Cheder: School for young Jewish children

Chesed: Hebrew word meaning acts of mercy

Cheshvon: Eighth month of the hebrew calendar

Chocham(Chochomim): Hebrew for 'sage' or scholar

Chol HaMoed: Intermediate days of a holiday

Chometz: Hebrew for leavening

choson: Hebrew/Yiddish for groom

Chovos HaLavavos: a moralistic and philosophical sefer

Chozeh: Hebrew for seer (prophet). Rebbe Yakov Yitzchok of Lublin was called the Chozeh because of his *Ruach HaKodesh.

Chukos: Weekly portion where the Torah is read from Bamidbar (Numbers) 19:1-22:1

D

daas: Hebrew word meaning knowledge

Dayanim: Hebrew for judge. Refers to religious judges.

Days of Awe: The days around the holidays of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, so called because they are days of judgement.

derech: Heb 'way' refers to a path in serving HaShem

Devorim: Fifth book of the Torah. Called in English 'Deuteronomy'.

doven(davening): Yiddish for pray.

Drash: A method of Biblical interpretation ascribing moral or ethical meaning to verses in the Torah.

E

Eichah: The Hebrew name for the book of Lamantations

Eliyahu HaNavi: Hebrew for the prophet Elijah
Elul: Sixth month of the Jewish year
Eruv: A legal act that causes different residences to be considered as one.
Eruvin: Tractate of the Talmud
Eyov: The Hebrew name for the book of Job

G

gabbai: Hebrew for an attendant
Gan Eden: Hebrew name for paradise
gematria: Numerical value of the letters of the Hebrew words
Gemilos Chasadim: Hebrew word referring to acts of mercy.
Ger Toshiv: A 'partial' convert who agrees not to worship idols
Gitten: Tractate of the Talmud
Gaon: Hebrew title of one who is an especially learned scholar in Torah
gehennim: Place where one is punished for one's sins after death. The Talmud says that except for especially wicked souls, the normal stay is up to one year.
gematria: The numerical value of the Hebrew letters.

H

Haftorah: A portion of the Tenach read after the Torah is read on Shabbos
Haggadah: Sefer that relates the story of the Exodus from Egypt and other things related to the night of Pesach.
HaKohen: Hebrew for 'the Priest' refers to someone who is a direct paternal descendant from Aaron in the Torah
halacha: Hebrew word meaning 'law'
HaRav: The Rov (see Rov).
HaRav HaKodesh: The Holy Rov (see Rov)
HaShem: Noun used in place of G-d. Lit. The Name
house bocher: Young man who lived in the house of a Rebbe and took care of private matters as needed.
Hoshanah Rabbah: Last day of the intermediate days of Succos. It is considered to be similar to Yom Kippur in that it is a time of repentance.
HY'D: Heb. HaShem Yimkom Domov: HaShem should avenge their blood.

I

Inyan: A spiritual concept or idea. A general idea as opposed to specifics. The specifics would be *bechinos.
Ivdah: A story that shows or teaches a specific method of serving HaShem

K

kallah: Hebrew/Yiddish for bride
Kavanah(Kavanos): Hebrew word for 'intention'.
Kesuvim: Third part of the Tenach. Lit. Writings
Kiddish: Ceremony performed on Friday night over a cup of wine.
Kohes: One of the books of the Tenach, called in English Ecclesiastes.
Kohen(Kohanim): Hebrew for 'the Priest' refers to someone who is a direct paternal descendant from Aaron in the Torah
Kol Nidrei: First prayer of Yom Kippur
kol v'chomer: Inference from a thing that is lesser/lighter to a thing which is greater/more stringent
kosel marovi: Hebrew for Western Wall, the only remaining standing part of the Temple.
kosher: Heb. fit. Refers to food that is permitted to eat.
kvitel: A note with names given to a Rebbe for him to pray for these people

L

L'Chaim: Refers to a custom of drinking and wishing L'Chaim - to life one to the other

M

machiton: Yiddish word that refers to ones child's in-laws
MaHarsha: Hebrew initials for : Moreinu HaRav Shmuel Eliezer (our teacher Rabbi Shmuel Eliezer) a famous Talmud commentator
Maggid: In Europe this was a person who would give sermons on moral subjects. Many of the first Rebbes were Maggidim (pl. of Maggid).
Malachi: One of the books of the Tenach.
Man: Hebrew for manna. The bread that fell from Heaven in the desert.
mazel tov: Hebrew for 'good luck'. Used for a wish of congratulations on various occasions
matonos l'evyonim: Hebrew for gifts to the poor. One of the mitzvot of Purim.
Megilla:
 1. Tractate of the Talmud
 2. Another name for the Biblical book of Esther
Megillas Esther: Hebrew for the book of Esther
melamed: Hebrew for a teacher of young children
Menuchos: Tractate of the Talmud
mesiros nefesh: Hebrew for self sacrifice
mezuzah: parchment with various portions of the Torah which is hung on the side of the door.
midah(midos): A character trait, either good or bad.

midah kenegid midah: Heb. measure for measure

Midrash: Rabbinical work with homiletic interpretations

Midrash Pleah: A specific Midrash which contains Midrashic teachings that are difficult to understand.

mikdash: Hebrew of temple, lit. place of holiness

mikvah: Hebrew word referring to a ritual bath used for purification

Minchah: Name of the afternoon prayer

minyan: Group of Jewish men (at least ten) who have gathered for prayer.

mishkan: Hebrew for tabernacle

Mishleh: One of the books of the Tenach, called in English Proverbs.

Mishloach Monos: Hebrew for the sending of delicacies. One of the mitzvos of Purim.

Mishnah: An ancient Jewish work made of specific laws.

Mispor Katon: Type of gematria where the value of the letters is added.

For example $26 = 2 + 6 = 8$.

Mitzrayim: Hebrew name for the land of Egypt

mitzvah(mitzvos): One of the commandments of the Torah.

mohel: Hebrew/Yiddish word for the person who performs a circumcision

Mori: Hebrew for my teacher.

Moshe Rabbeinu: Hebrew for Moses our teacher. A common Jewish way of referring to Moses.

Moshiach: Heb. Messiah

Motzeh Shabbos: Hebrew for Saturday night

musar: Hebrew for moral instruction.

N

nashama: Hebrew word for soul.

Nevium: Second part of the Tenach. Lit. Prophets

niggunim: Hebrew for songs. Usually used to refer to tunes composed and sung by Chasidim and their Rebbees.

Nissan: First month of the Hebrew calendar

O

O'H: Hebrew initials for the words: Olav HaShalom (may he rest in peace)

Orach Chaim: One of 4 sections of the Shulchan Aruch. This deals with the laws that apply to each person on a daily basis, throughout the year.

Or HaChaim: Jewish Torah commentary

P

Parah: Tractate of the Mishnah

Parsha (Parshos): lit. 'portion' refers to the portion of the Torah read each week.

Parshas HaChodesh: Special Parsha of the Torah read on the Shabbos before the first of the month of Nissan.

Parshas Parah: Special Parsha of the Torah read the Shabbos after Purim.

payyut: A type of prayer similar to a poem said on Jewish holidays

Peah: Tractate of the Mishnah

Pesach: Hebrew for Passover

Pesachim: One of the Tractates of the Talmud

peshat: A method of Biblical interpretation based on finding the simple meaning in the Torah.

posek: A verse in the Torah or Tenach

Pilishtim: Hebrew for Philistines

pilpul (pilpulim): Method of learning which involves hair-splitting logic.

Pirkei Avos: A Tractate of the Mishnah

R

Rambam: Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon also called Maimonides

Ramban: Rabbi Nachman ben Moshe, also called Nachmanides

Rashi: The primary commentary on the Tenach.

Rav: An official rabbi who renders legal decisions. Many of the Rebbees were both a Rebbe of Chasidim, and the Rov of the city in which they lived.

Reb: A title added to a persons name as a sign of respect.

Rebbe: Leader of a Chassidic group or a teacher

Rebbe Reb: A title added to a few special Rebbees as a sign of their higher spiritual stature.

remez: A method of Biblical interpretation based on finding hints in the Torah for various concepts.

Rosh HaShanah:

1. Heb. New Year Holiday at the beginning of the year.

2. A tractate of the Talmud

Rov: see Rav

Ruach HaKodesh: Heb spirit of holiness. Refers to one who can see events, and understand things that are not apparent to the human eye.

Rus: Hebrew name the book of Ruth

S

Samech Mem: Two Hebrew letters from the traditional name of the angel also called Satan. They are used instead of the name itself.

Sanhedrin: Tractate in the Talmud

Seder: Meal eaten the night of Passover where the Exodus from Egypt is remembered.

sefer(seforim): A Jewish religious book.

Sefer Yitzerah: Hebrew Kabbalistic work.

Seferah: The mitzvah of counting the days from Pesach to Shevout

Segal: Hebrew for 'Segan L'Kohen' assistant to the priest. refers to one who is of the tribe of Levi.

Shabbos: 1. Tractate in the Talmud
2. Seventh day of the week

Shabbos Chazon: Shabbos before Tisha B'Av

Shabbos Hefsekah: The Shabbos between Shabbos Shekalim and Shabbos Zachor.

Shabbos Nachmu: Shabbos after Tisha B'Av

Shabbos Shekalim: Shabbos before the 1st of Adar

Shabbos Tshuva: Shabbos between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur

Shabbos Zachor: Shabbos before the holiday of Purim

Shalom Bayis: Hebrew phrase referring to peaceful relations between husband and wife

Shechina: Hebrew word denoting the divine presence.

Shekalim: See Shabbos Shekalim

Shemos: Second book of the Torah. Called Exodus in English

sheiner yid: Yiddish phrase referring to a Jew who considers himself better than others.

Sheolos v'Tshuvos: Heb. Questions and Answers. This refers to Jewish scholarly books which are based on legal questions asked of Rabbis and their answers.

Shevout: Jewish holiday 50 days after Pesach

Shemini Atzeres: Eighth day of the holiday of Succos. it is a holiday for itself

Shema: Main Jewish prayer of the confession of faith. Contains 3 parshas. Devorim 6.5-9; 11.13-21 and Bamidbar 15.37-41

Shemos: The second book of the Torah. Called in English Exodus.

Shevi'i Shel Pesach: Seventh day of the holiday of Pesach

Shir HaShirim: Hebrew name for the Song of Songs

Shir HaShirimRabbah: Rabbinic Midrash on Song of Songs

Shlah: Jewish scholarly commentary on the Torah, and Jewish holidays by Rabbi Isaiah Horowitz

Shlita: Hebrew Initials for the words: Sh'Yichiya L'Aruch Yomim Tovim Amen. (He should have a good long life amen)

Shmuel: Hebrew name of the book of Samuel

shochet: Hebrew word for a person who performs ritual slaughter of animals.

Shofar: A ram's horn blown on Rosh HaShanah

shtender: A stand of lectern, where books were placed during learning, or where a prayer book was placed by prayers.

Shul: Yiddish name for a synagogue

Shulchan Aruch: 15th/16th century book of Jewish law

Siddur: Jewish prayer book.

Sifrei: Midrashic work on Devorim

Simchas Torah: Second day of Shemini Atzeres (in Israel there is only a single day), where one celebrates the completion of the readings of the Torah for that year.

Slichos: Penitential prayers said on the days before Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur

sod: A method of Biblical interpretation based on describing secret teachings in the Torah.

Sodom: Biblical city filled with wicked people

Sota: A tractate of the Talmud

strakes: Strips of velvet sown into the garments of some of the Rebbes, or great Rabbis.

Succos: Holiday after Yom Kippur where people sit in booths

Sukkah: One of the tractates of the Talmud

T

Taanis: One of the tractates of the Talmud.

Talis(talesim): A special garment that is used to cover a person in prayer.

talmidei: Hebrew for 'disciples of'

Talmid (Talmidim): Disciples of a Rebbe.

Talmud: An ancient work of Jewish law.

Talmud Chocham(Talmidei Chochomim): Hebrew for Talmud sage, refers to one who is learned in Jewish legal texts.

Tanna(Tannaim): Rabbis of the Talmud

Tanya: Important chassidic work By Rebbe Shneur Zalman of Liadi.

Targum Onkeles: Aramaic translation of the Torah by Onkeles

Taz: One of the major commentators on the Shulchan Aruch

techalis: thread of blue wool attached to a talis

Tehillim: Hebrew name for Psalms.

Tekunei Zohar: The most esoteric section of the Zohar

Tenach: First letters from the three Hebrew words: Torah, Neviim, Kesuvim, which are the divisions of the Jewish Bible. Torah is the first five books, Neviim are the prophetic works and Kesuvim are the other books.

tephilin: Special boxes that contain passages of the Torah which are worn by men in daily prayer.

terumah: Hebrew word for offering

Tisha B'Av: 9th day of the month of Av, a major fast day

tisch: Yiddish for 'table' Refers to a meal eaten by a Rebbe with his Chasidim

Tishrei: Seventh Month of the Hebrew calendar Torah:

- a. First 5 books of the Jewish Bible
- b. Also refers to the whole of Jewish law
- c. also common term for a chassidic teaching

Tosephos: commentary on the talmud by the talmidim of Rashi

Tshuva: Hebrew word for repentance

Three Weeks: Period of time from 17 of Tammuz to 9 of Av

Tzaddakah: Hebrew for charity

Tzaddekus: righteous women

Tzaddik (Tzaddikim): lit. Righteous. Another name for a Chassidic Rebbe.

tzitzis: Strands that hang from the corners of a talis

V

V'yikra: Hebrew for the book of Leviticus

Y

Yakov: Hebrew for Jacob

Yakov Aveinu: Hebrew for 'our father jacob'

Yavatz: Hebrew initials for Yaakov ben Tzvi. Name of Rabbi Yaakov Emden

Yechzkel: Hebrew name for the book of Ezekiel

Yehoshua: Hebrew for Joshua

Yerushalmi: Talmud that was compiled in Palestine as opposed to the standard one that was compiled in Babylonia called the Bavli

Yeshaya: Hebrew name for book of Isaiah

Yeshiva: School for older boys

Yetzer: lit. Inclination. It is Jewish belief that every Jew has both an evil and good inclination within him, that are at 'war' to see which of them the person will follow.

Yetzer HaRah: Heb. Evil Inclination.

Yetzer Tov: Heb. Good Inclination

Yirmiya: Hebrew name for the book of Jeremiah

Yitzchok: Hebrew for Isaac

YM'Sh: Heb. Yimach Shimoh V'Zichro : Their name should be erased Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement, the most holy day of the Jewish year.

Yom Suf: Hebrew 'sea of reeds'.

Yom Tov: Hebrew name for 'holiday'

Yortzheit: Yiddish for the day of the anniversary of a death

Z

Z'L: Hebrew initials of the words: Zechorono LeVaracha (His memory is a blessing.)

Zachor: See Shabbos Zachor

Zemeros: sefer of songs sung on various occasions

Zohar: Hebrew/Aramaic Rabbinical Kabbalistical work that is one of the most important sources for Kabbalah, and was very influential with Chasidim

Zohar Chadash: Literally 'new Zohar'. A section of the Zohar.

ZT'L: Hebrew initials of the words: Zechor Tzaddik LeVaracha (The memory of a Tzaddik - Righteous person is a blessing.)

ZTvK'L: Hebrew initials of the words: Zechor Tzaddik veKadosh LeVaracha (The memory of a Tzaddik - Righteous man and a Kodosh - a holy man is a blessing)

ZY'A: Hebrew initials for Zechiso Yugan Aleini, His merit should protect us