



The Harvest

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Glossary of Transliterated Hebrew Words

Abba – Means ‘father’

Afikomen – Means ‘dessert’ – it contains a broken piece of matzah and is hidden during the Passover seder only to be brought out at the end of the meal (hence ‘dessert’).

Aliyah – To immigrate to the land of Israel, also being called to read from Torah at shul or to recite the blessing.

Apostolic Writings – aka New Testament

Ashkenazi – Eastern and central European Jews, also Jews from France; Ashkenazim have customs that differ from Sephardic Jews.

Baruch – Means blessed (Blessings begin with “Baruch atah...”); Berachot = Blessings.

Brit Chadasha – Means ‘New Covenant’. Some use this term to refer to the New Testament or Apostolic Writings.

Chag Sameach – A greeting used to mean ‘Happy Holiday’ during the festivals. Can be personalized for the specific moedim (festival): Chag Sameach Pesakh, Chag Sukkot, etc.

Challah – A sweet egg bread served traditionally as a braided loaf for the weekly Shabbat (Sabbath) and served in a round shape for Rosh Hoshana.

Chametz – Means ‘leaven’ which is forbidden during Pesach (Passover) and Chag HaMatzah (Unleavened Bread).

Chanukah or Hanukkah – Means “Dedication” [festival of] and traditionally commemorates the battle triumph of the Maccabees in recapturing Jerusalem.

Chanukiah or Hanukiah – The 9-branched menorah used at Chanukah, as opposed to the biblical 7-branched menorah in the Temple.

Charoset – Traditionally, this is mixture of apples, raisons, nuts and wine served at Pesach (Passover) to represent mortar on the seder plate.

Daven – To pray.

Days of Awe – Traditionally, the ten days following Rosh Hoshana and preceding Yom Kippur; aka “Ten Days of Awe.”

This is a time to examine one’s life, make peace, seek forgiveness and make amends for all the wrongs committed in the previous year.

Diaspora – The dispersion of the Jewish people to lands outside of Israel.

Haftarah – Weekly reading from the Prophets, read in addition to Torah Parsha (portion).

Haggadah – Means ‘the telling’ of the Exodus, it codifies the order of the Pesach meal (seder).

Halachah – Means “the way to go” or the “way to walk” and may refer to a single rule, to the entire literary corpus of rabbinic legal texts, as well as to the overall system of Jewish religious law.

HaShem – Literally means “The Name” in Hebrew and refers to The Name of the L-RD. Commonly used as a respectful substitute for the four Hebrew letters (yud-hey-vav-hey) or Tetragrammaton, that form His ineffable Name. Removing the letter “O” in G-d and L-rd is also another way of remaining respectful of HaShem, and sanctifying His Name in everyday correspondence.

Havdalah – Means ‘separation.’ An traditional observance marking the end of the weekly Shabbat/Sabbath with wine, spices and blessings.

Kashrut – Means ‘proper’ and refers to Kosher dietary laws.

Ketubah – A traditional Jewish marriage contract

Kiddush - Prayer of sanctification

Kosher – Foods that Torah permits man to eat are kosher. Used loosely to mean anything permissible for G-d’s people.

Lashon Hara – Means ‘evil tongue’ and is a prohibition against harmful speech against others

L’Chayim – From ‘Chai’ meaning ‘life’ – this popular greeting means ‘to life.’

Mashiach/Moshiach – Means ‘annointed’ and translated as Messiah.

Matzah – Unleavened bread eaten during Pesakh (Passover) which Yeshua used to designate His body at the last Pesach seder (Last Supper) prior to His crucifixion.

Mazel Tov – Means ‘good star’ or ‘good constellation’ and comes from Jewish mysticism; commonly used today as ‘congratulations.’

Menorah – The seven-branched lampstand G-d commanded the Israelites to make and to provide light inside the Tabernacle and later the Temple.

Messiah – Means ‘annointed’ and comes from the Hebrew word ‘mashiach.’ Yeshua is The Messiah foretold in the TaNaKh.

Mezuzah – Means ‘doorpost’ — this is a rabbinic tradition where a miniature scroll is affixed to a doorway. The mezuzah contains two verses inside it, Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and 11:13-21. G-d instructs us in these two passages to “Lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates.” “These words” refer to His Torah.

Midrash – Means ‘study’

Mikvah – (plural = mikva’ot) an artificial pool of water used for total immersion in a purification ceremony within Judaism or the act of purification through total immersion (translated as “baptism” in the English NT). At the time of Yeshua, mikveh was used to identify one’s religious affiliations and to renew one’s faith — baptism itself is a type of mikveh. Mikva’ot are used today by Torah observant women to achieve ritual purity after menstruation or childbirth, Torah observant men to achieve ritual purity, as part of the procedure for conversion to Judaism, and to purify utensils used for food.

Mitzvah/Mitzvot – Means ‘commandment’ — used to mean any commandment or good deed one might perform.

Mo’ed or Mo’edim – Singular and plural, respectively, for “G-d’s Appointed Time”. G-d tells us in His Torah (Gen. 1: 14) that He created the sun, moon, and stars in the sky solely for us to use in planning to meet Him at His appointed times (the Hebrew word that is translated as “seasons” in most English Bibles in that verse is actually mo’edim, or appointed times). G-d’s appointed times (incorrectly referred to as “Jewish Holidays”) are:

* Yom Teruah (lit. Head of the Year, i.e. New Year; Feast of Trumpets; etc.)

* Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)

* Sukkot (Booths; Feast of Tabernacles, etc.)

* Pesach (Passover)

* Chag HaMatzah (Unleavened Bread)

* Shavuot (Weeks; Pentacost, etc.)

* Rosh Chodesh (lit. Head of the Month, i.e. New Moon/New Month)

* Shabbat (Sabbath) Defined as G-d has defined it—the seventh day of the week

Niddah – The laws governing separation of man and wife during her menstrual cycle.

Oral Torah/Oral Law – These are traditional writings written by rabbis and scribes. Considered by traditional/rabbinic Judaism to be as inspired as Scripture itself, called the Talmud, which consists of Mishneh and its commentaries (Gemara). Messianic Judaism does not consider the oral tradition equal to the Bible.

Parasha – The weekly Torah readings read at shul and studied at home.

Patriarchs – Refers to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob — forefathers of the Jewish people often also referred to as *The Fathers*.

Pharisees/P’rushim – Ancestor to modern day rabbinic Judaism — this sect of Judaism was flourishing at the time of Yeshua — they put great importance on the oral tradition. After the destruction of the temple, most other sects of Judaism died out, leaving Pharisaic Judaism to dominate. Yeshua had positive things to say about the Pharisees, fellowshiping with them often, and instructed His followers to “Do as they say” and then later on chose a Pharisee to lead the grafted-in Gentiles.

Purim – Means ‘lots’ and is the celebration of Jewish victory after the failed attempt to exterminate Jews from Persia — story found in scroll of Esther.

Rabbi / Rav – (also rebbe) Means ‘master’ — used in messianic circles by those who ignore Matthew 23:8 by seeking superiority and authority over others. (Judaism tends to require a degree or some sort of certification — a knowledgeable layman generally won’t earn such a title anymore).

Rebbetzin – Means the wife of a rabbi

Rosh Chodesh – Means ‘head of the month’ — the new month begins when the first sliver of the new moon is seen.

Rosh Hashana – Traditional Judaism refers to Rosh Hashana as the ‘new year’ but this is actually inaccurate from a Scriptural point of view. In Scripture, Rosh Hashana (or “Feast of Trumpets/Shofar) occurs in the seventh month, not the first month. It is not the new year at all according to biblical year reckoning but according to the agricultural year.

Ruach – Means ‘Spirit’ from Hebrew for ‘wind, breath, air, strength, breeze.’

Ruach HaKodesh – The Holy Spirit; also known as Bat HaKol (Daughter of the Voice) in Talmudic writings.

Sabbath – From ‘Shabbat’ — G-d blessed and sanctified the seventh day of the week as a day of rest.

Sadducees – This sect of Judaism died out with the loss of the temple in 70CE, since their whole belief revolved around temple work, and not oral tradition. Yeshua did not instruct His disciples to follow the ways of the Sadducees and He did not fellowship with them in His ministry.

Sages – Refers to the great Jewish scholars whose work is preserved still this day in oral tradition.

Seder – Means ‘order’ and is usually used to refer to the Pesach dinner using the Haggadah as a guide.

Sephardic Jews – Jews from Spain, Portugal, Africa and middle eastern countries.

Shabbat – Means ‘Sabbath’. G-d blessed and sanctified the seventh day of the week as a day of rest.

Shabbat Shalom – Means ‘peaceful sabbath’ — a common greeting when Shabbat is approaching.

Shalom – Means ‘peace’ but also used as a greeting to say hello or goodbye.

Shalom Aliechem – Means ‘peace to you’ or ‘peace unto you’ — a greeting.

Shavua Tov – Means ‘good week’ and is a popular greeting when shabbat ends.

Shavuot – Means ‘weeks’ — known in Greek as Pentecost.

Shekinah – (Also spelled Shechinah, Shekinah, etc.) The manifested presence of G-d.

Shema – Means ‘hear’ and is the quintessential Jewish text from Deuteronomy 6:4: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD” showing the uniqueness of the G-d of Israel. Israel didn’t require many gods (like harvest gods, fertility gods, fire gods) The G-d of Israel is unique and infinite — He alone is sovereign. Reciting the Shema at set times during the day is akin to reciting marriage vows to your spouse or, in old American public schools, daily reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Shofar – Ram’s horn, also translated ‘trumpet’ in some bibles.

Siddur – Prayer book

Simchat Torah – Means rejoicing in Torah and celebrates the ending and beginning of the Torah parshot annual reading cycle.

Sukkah – Means ‘booth’ and translated ‘tabernacles’ in some bibles. Shaul the tentmaker may have been a sukkah maker.

Sukkot – Means ‘booths’ — this is the festival of tabernacles which commemorates G-d’s protection on Israel when she lived in tents under His protection.

Synagogue – From the Greek synagogia, this is a meeting place for assembly.

Syncretism – Religious syncretism is the blending of two (or more) religious belief systems and/or practices into a new system. This often happens when one people group is conquered by another, or when it benefits the political leaders by pleasing the masses to join two (or more) groups together under one new system.

Tallit – Prayer shawl with tzitzit (fringed edges), based on the command in Numbers 15:38 and Deuteronomy 22:12 that men wear Tzitzit on their garments. The prayer shawl is a rabbinic compromise to this law since a tallit isn’t quite a garment, but it does contain tzitzit.

Talmidim – Literally means “students”, especially disciples; Talmid = Student = Disciple

Talmud – The collection of oral tradition: the Mishneh and Gemara/commentaries.

TaNaKh – An acronym that identifies the Hebrew Bible (a.k.a. Old Testament). The acronym is based on the initial Hebrew letters of each of the text’s three parts:

* **Torah** (תּוֹרָה)–meaning “Instruction” (not “law”) and is composed of the “five books of Moses”, also called Pentateuch in Greek.

* **Nevi’im** (נְבִיאִים)–meaning “Prophets”.

* **Ketuvim** (כְּתוּבִים)–meaning “Writings”.

“Rendered ‘scripture’ or ‘it is written’ in most translations of the New Testament. The reason the New Testament writers cite the TaNaKh so frequently is that they understand it as G-d’s authoritative Word to mankind.” (David H. Stern)

Tashlich – Means ‘casting away’ and refers to a tradition on Rosh Hashana of casting bread or a stone into a body of moving water to symbolize sins being removed.

Tefillin – Means ‘remembrance’, called phylacteries in the English Bible. These are leather boxes containing scrolls with Scripture passages, the rabbis interpreted G-d’s command to wear His Word on hands and forehead.

Teshuvah – Means ‘return’ as in ‘return to G-d; teshuvah is the way to repent: to stop and turn in the direction of G-d.

Tisha B’Av – Means the ‘ninth of Av’ — a fast day remembering the temple destructions.

Torah – Means ‘instruction’ and refers to the books of Moshe – the ‘law’ comprised of the books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. ‘Torah’ is also used loosely in traditional Judaism to mean all Jewish law, Scriptural and oral.

Tzedakah – From same root as Tzaddik, meaning righteous, but refers to charity. Many Jewish homes have a small box for collecting money that will later be donated to a charitable cause.

Tzitzit – Fringes G-d commanded be attached to the corners of garments.

Yeshiva – Institution for Torah and Talmud study primarily within Orthodox Judaism and primarily attended by males. This word may also refer to a religious Jewish school for all ages and for both genders.

Yeshua – The Aramaic name you might recognize as the English “Jesus”. In Hebrew, it is the masculine form of the word, “yeshu’ah” or “salvation”. Yeshua is derived from Yehoshua, which is often translated as Joshua. In fact, His Name means “The L-rd Saves”. The word used as His Name, “Jesus” is actually a relatively recent creation (17th Century) and is the anglophonization of the Latinized word for the Greek word “Iêsous”.

Yiddish – Originating among Ashkenazic Jews, this language is based on German using Hebrew letters.

Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement, holy day occurring ten days after Rosh Hoshana (Blowing of Trumpets). “It shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto YHVH.” Leviticus 23:27 “Soul affliction” is interpreted by many to mean fasting.



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