



OT

HA'SHAVUA

Sign - Letter of the Week

**A Program Highlighting Jewish
Values & an Associated Letter**

Ot HaShavua Values List

Ot #	Ot	The sign in Hebrew	Sign of the letter – a Jewish value
1	Alef	Emet	Truth
2	Bet	Bikur Holim	Visiting the sick
3	Gimel	Gmilit Hesed	Deed of loving kindness
4	Dalet	Derekh Eretz	Manners
5	Hey	Hoda'ah	Gratitude
6	Vav	V'ahavta	And you shall love (your neighbor, God)
7	Zayin	Zikaron	Remembrance
8	Het	Herut	Freedom
9	Tet	Hakarat haTov	Recognizing the Good in people (appreciation)
10	Yud	Yisrael	Yediat Yisrael: Knowledge about Israel Am Yisrael arevim ze l' ze: Responsibility to all Jews
11	Kaf	Kavod	Respect – honor your mom and dad and each other
	Khaf Sofit	Barukh	Blessed/Praised
12	Lamed	Limud Torah	Studying and Teaching Torah
13	Mem	Middot & Mitzvot	Virtues & Commandments
	Mem Sofit	Shalom	Wholeness (peace)
14	Nun	Nedivut	Generosity
	Nun Sofit	Korban	Sacrifice
15	Samekh	Seliah	Forgiveness
16	Ayin	Aseret Hadibrot	10 Commandments
17	Pey	Pikuah Nefesh	Saving a life (is the most important mitzvah)
	Fey Sofit	Shmirat Ha'guf	Caring for the body
18	Tzadi	Tzedek Tirdof	Pursue Justice
	Tzadi Sofit	Ahavat ha'Aretz	Love of the Land
19	Kuf	Kehilla K'dosha	Holy community
20	Raysh	Rahamim	Mercy, compassion
21	Shin	Shmira	Taking care
22	Taf	Tikkun Olam	Repairing the world

Compiled by

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5768 - 2008





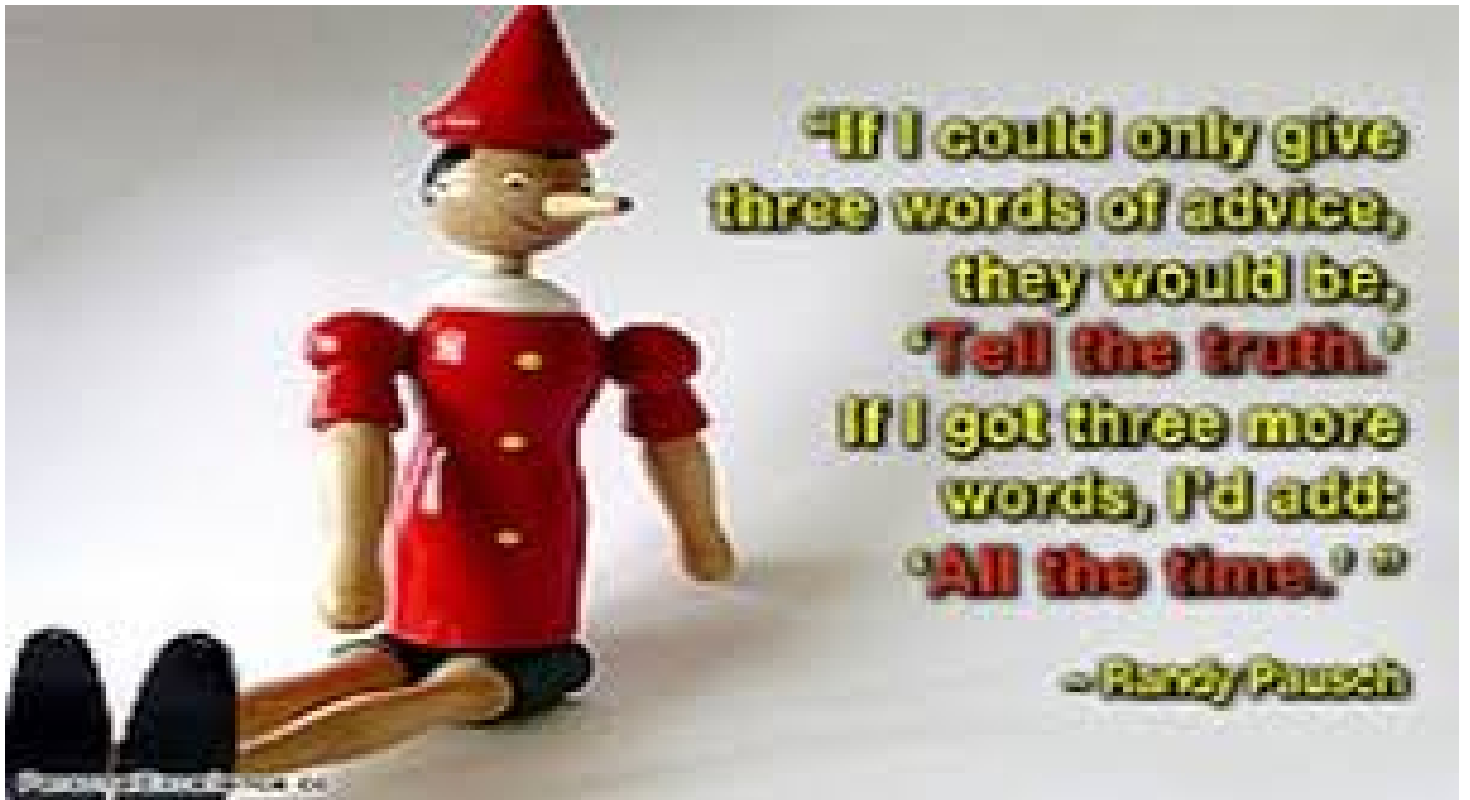
Alef

Emet

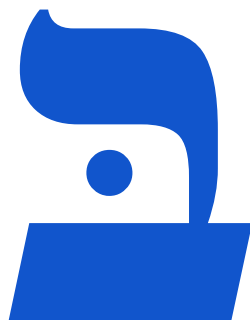
אמת

Truth

אמת



Emet In Hebrew (אמת) translates to truth, firmness, or faithfulness. It is a word made up of the first, middle, and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet, symbolizing truth from beginning to end.



Bet

Bikur
Holim

בִּיקּוּר
חוֹלִים

Visiting the Sick

בִּיקוּר חוֹלִים



Bikur Holim is the fundamental Jewish commandment of visiting and aiding the sick. It can also involve delivering meals, offering financial or practical support, and praying for a patient's recovery. Bikur Holim prevents that sick person from feeling alone, and making sure they are cared for by the community.



Gimmel

Gmilut גְּמִילוּת
Hasadim חֲסָדִים

Deeds of
Lovingkindness

גְּמִילוּת חֶסֶדִים



Gmilot Hasadim - are deeds of loving kindness. There is a famous saying from the Talmud: The world stands on 3 things - *Torah, Worship, and Deeds of Loving kindness*. Gemilut Hasadim are acts of kindness which can be performed for anyone, rich or poor, and requires the giving of one's personal time, care, or effort.



ד

Dalet

Derekh
Eretz

דֶּרֶךְ
אֶרֶץ

Manners

דֶּרֶךְ אֶרֶץ

Derech Eretz literally means "the way of the land" and refers to basic good manners, and moral behavior that we should exhibit in our community. Derekh Eretz is common courtesy, respect for elders, always trying to do the right thing, and basically being a good, considerate person, a *mensch*. In the Talmud we find the quote "Derekh Eretz Kadma La'Torah" - behaving with Derekh Eretz is the trunk of the Tree of Life - without common courtesy it makes no sense to do the rest of the mitzvot (branches) in the Torah!





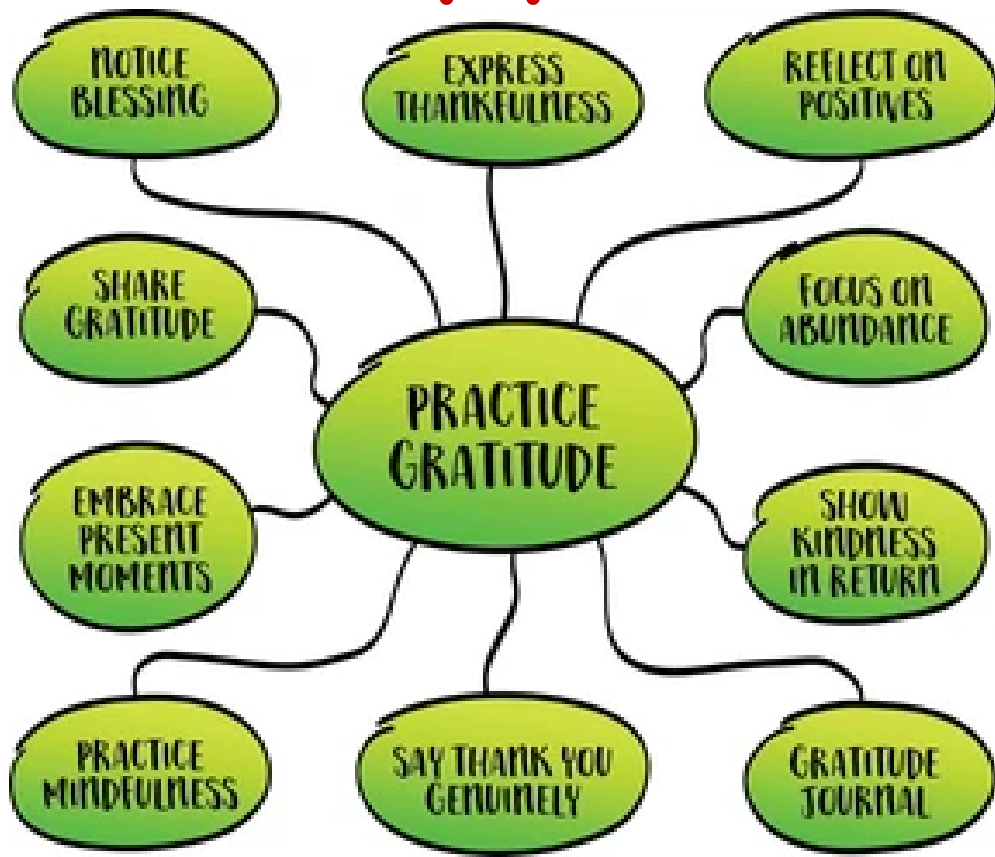
ה

Hey

Hoda-ah הודָאָה

Gratitude

הודאה



Hoda-ah means being thankful and appreciative for the good things, people, and experiences in your life. It involves recognizing the positive aspects of your life and acknowledging that much of this goodness often comes from sources outside of yourself.



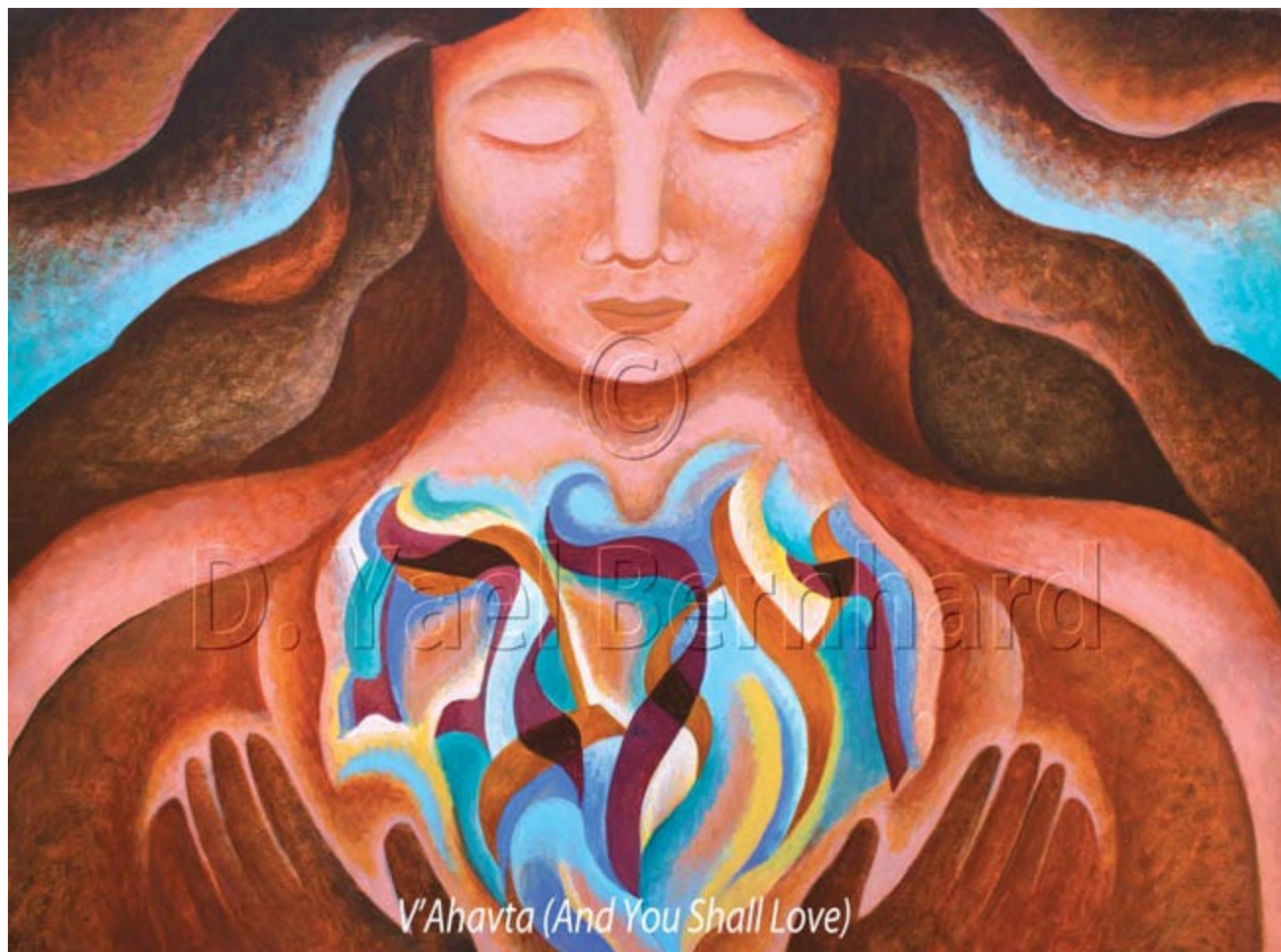
Vav

V'ahavta

וְאַהֲבָתָּהּ

And you shall love...
(e.g. God, your neighbor,
yourself)

וְאַהֲבָה



V'ahavta refers to the first paragraph that follows the Shma in the Torah. In the prayer it is the commandment to love the One God with all your heart, soul, and might. Literally we should show love to God and others through loving actions.



ז

Zayin

Zikaron

זִכְרוֹן

Remembrance

זכרון



Zikaron is the Hebrew word that translates to **remembrance, memorial, or reminder**. In Jewish tradition, it also represents bringing historical events, covenants, or loved ones into the present to shape the future.

It is a Jewish tradition to remember loved ones who have passed by lighting a remembrance candle, Ner Zikaron, on the Yahrzeit, anniversary of the death (see picture of an electric and candle version).



ח

Het

Herut

חירות

Hofesh

חופש

Freedom



Herut means freedom. Freedom is the right to speak, and make choices about where you live, or how you live without being forced or prevented from doing so. Jews have often not had this freedom so it is a very precious value. **Hofesh** - is usually associated with the freedom of a break from school or a vacation.



ט

Tet

Hakarat

Ha'tov

הַפֶּקֶדָה

הַטוֹב

**Recognizing the Good
(appreciation)**

הַפֶּקֶד הַטוֹב



Hakarat Ha'tov is a core Jewish value which means 'recognizing the good'. Acknowledging and appreciating positive aspects of life or people, such as kindness, blessings, gratitude, helps us not take things for granted.



Yud

Yediat
Eretz
Yisrael

יְדִיעַת אֶרֶץ
יִשְׂרָאֵל

**Knowledge about
Israel**

יְדִיעַת אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל



Yediat Eretz Yisrael is the value of knowing the facts about the 3000 year connection of Jews to the Jewish ancestral homeland from a theological, spiritual and historical perspective. In today's world of fake news, this is very important knowledge.



כ

Kaf

Kavod כבוד

Respect

כבוד

I will always treat
my classmates with
respect.



Kavod is the value of giving respect or honor to someone. The word comes from the root *Khaf-Vet-Dalet* which means heavy. Giving respect is an important but heavy responsibility.



ך

Khaf Sofit

Barukh ברוך

Blessed/Praised

ברוך



Barukh comes from the Hebrew root *bet-resh-chaf*, which is closely tied to the word *berekh* (knee). Usually the act of bowing, or bending at the knee is a sign of respect and humility, acknowledging that there is something grand beyond us. Showing gratitude to the divine and to the everyday miracles of creation is a core Jewish value and we begin our acknowledgement with the word **barukh**. “*Barukh Ha’shem*” is a casual expression for ‘thank God’.



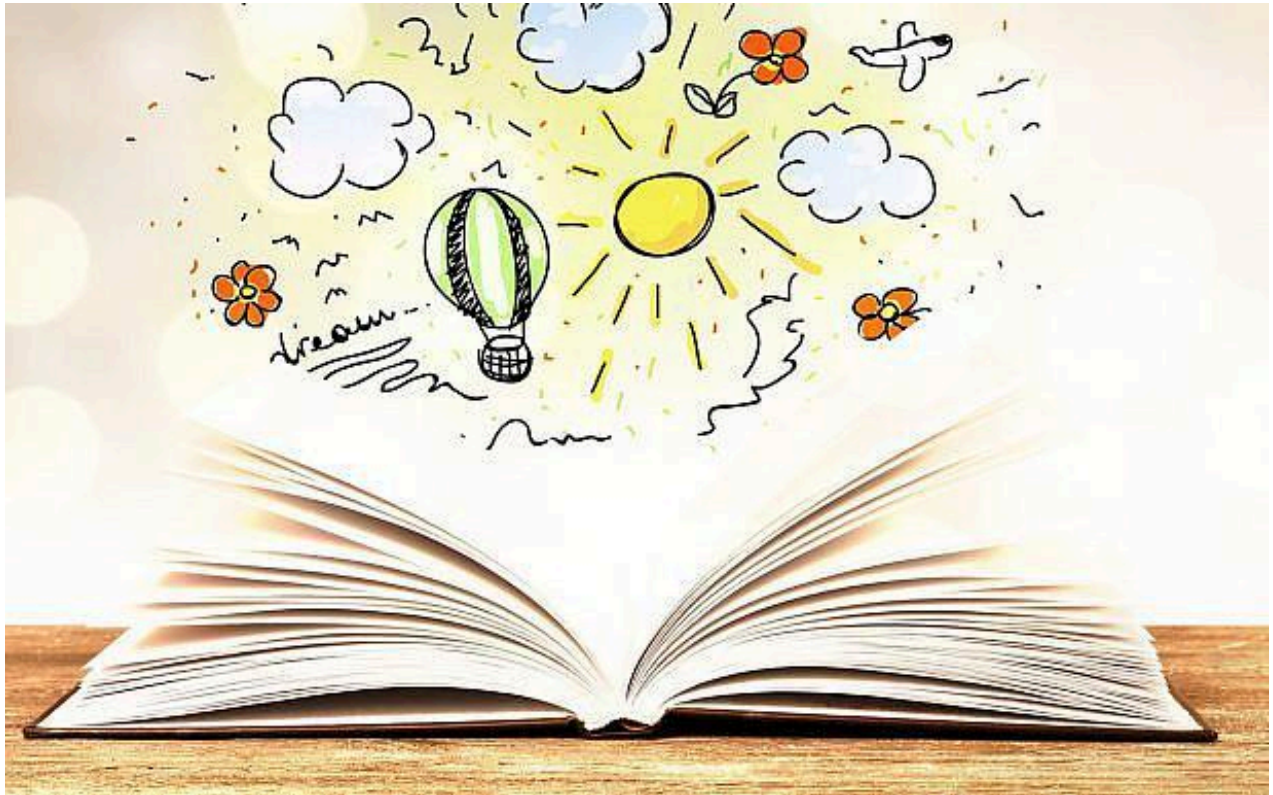
ל

Lamed

לימוד Limud

Learning

לימוד



Limud refers to the process of acquiring knowledge and is a central Jewish value. Limud emphasizes that learning is a lifelong activity and includes engaging with sacred texts such as torah and talmud.

Limud leads to action!



מ

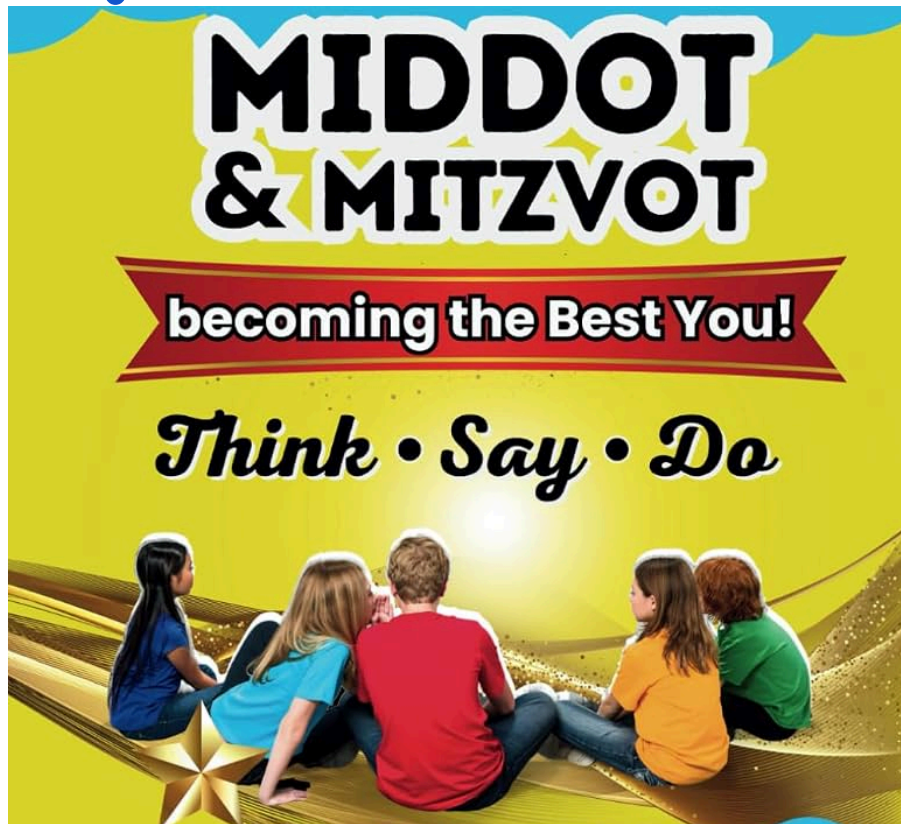
Mem

Middot מידות

Mitzvot מצוות

M&Ms: Virtues
Commandments

מִדּוֹת & מִצְוֹת



Middot are good character traits or virtues like being friendly, kind and grateful.

Mitzvot are the commandments in the Torah like respecting your parents, keeping Shabbat, telling the truth, doing good deeds.

Having good ***Middot*** & doing ***Mitzvot*** help you be the best Jewish you.



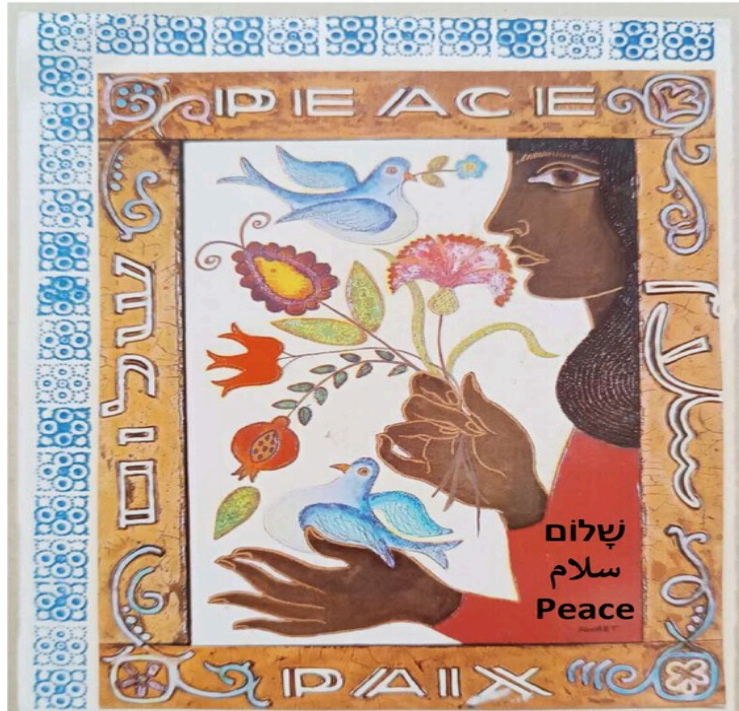
Mem Sofit

Shalom **שלום**

Wholeness (peace)

שלום

Shalom - Salaam - Peace



Shalom is a Hebrew word most commonly translated as "peace". Its root, *Shin-Lamed-Mem*, means "whole" or "complete," thus shalom represents wholeness, well-being, harmony, and balance. In the past, people greeted each other with the expression "Shalom Aleikhem" - may peace or the feeling of wholeness be upon you. Today that's been shortened to simply shalom as hello or good-bye.



נ

Nun

Nedivut נְדִיבוּת

Generosity

נְדִיבוּת



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Nedivut is the Hebrew word for generosity or being charitable. Derived from the root Nun-Dalet-Vet which means willing, Nedivut refers to having a heart willing to give freely and openly. Nedivut means willing to share easily.



נ

Final Nun

Korban

קֹרְבָן

Sacrifice

קָרְבָּן



Korban refers to the animal sacrifices the Israelites made in Temple times. A person sacrificed their best cattle or grain to express gratitude or atone for a sin. The word comes from the root *Kuf-Reysh-Vet* which means to draw close. In the past sacrifices helped us draw close to God. Today we use prayer and acts of tzedakah (a sacrifice of time) in order to ‘draw close’ to God spiritually.



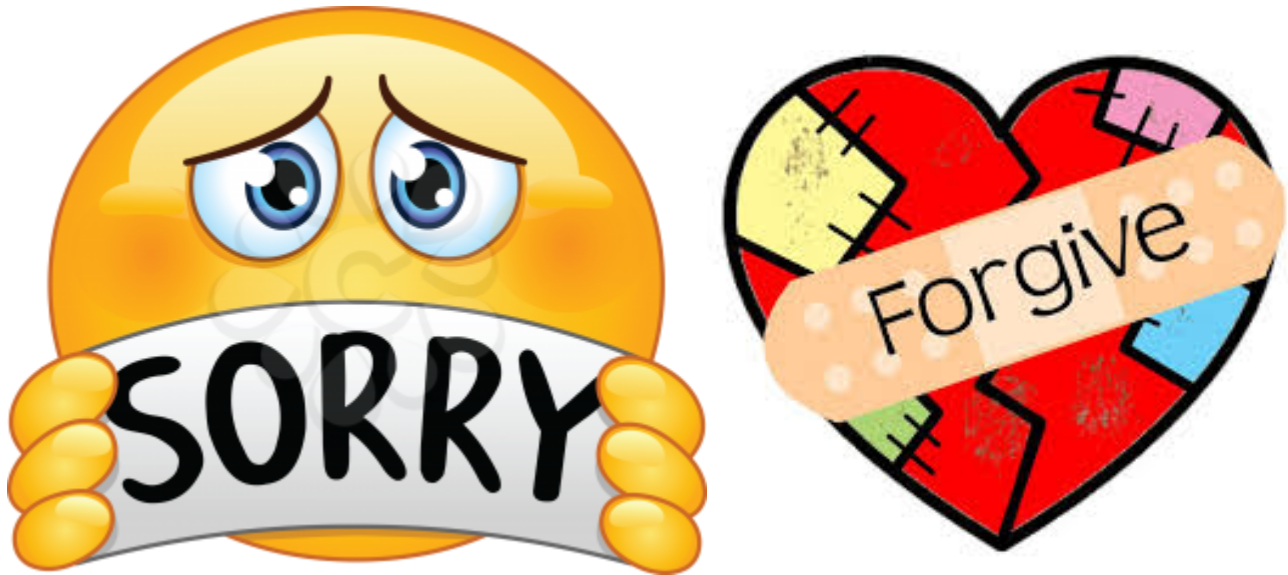
ס

Samekh

Selihah סְלִיחָה

Forgiveness

סליחה



Selihah in Hebrew is used to say “excuse me” or “I’m sorry”. It comes from the root *Samekh-Lamed-Het* which means to forgive. Around the time of the High Holy Days we recite Selihot - prayers and poems that focus on repentance - seeking forgiveness from God and others, as well as the reverse, forgiving others for their mistakes.



ע

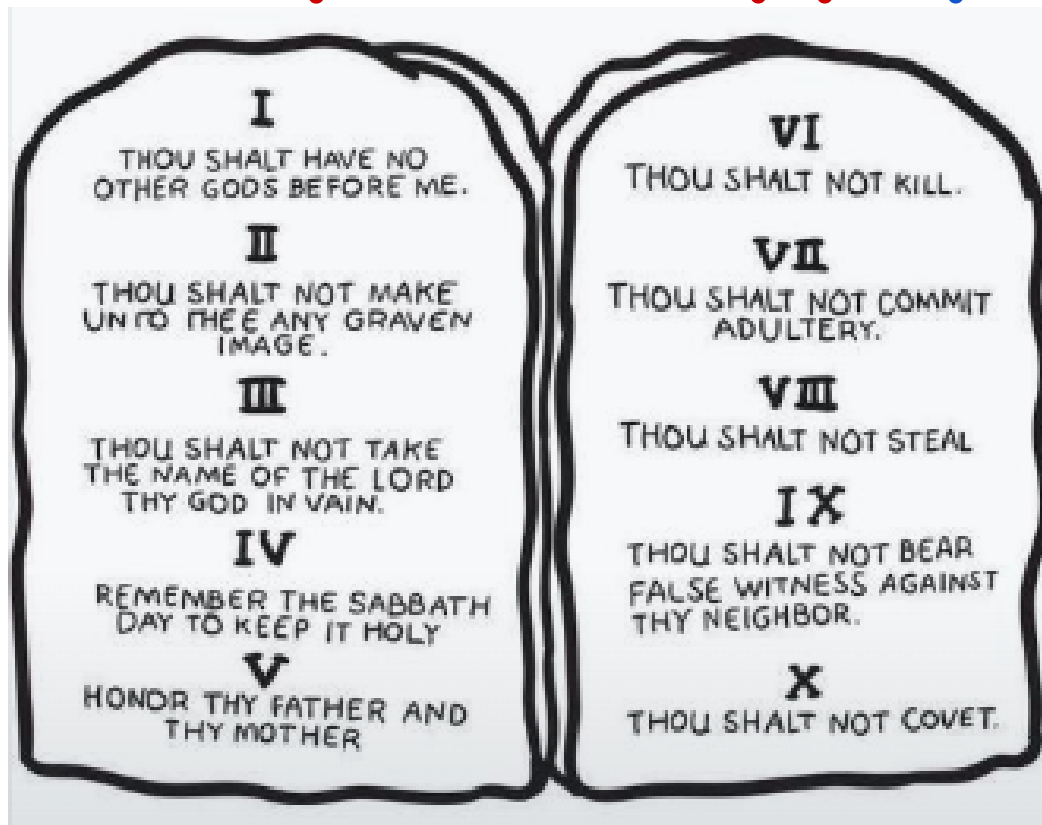
Ayin

Aseret
Ha'dibrot

עשרת
הדברות

The Ten Commandments

עשרת הדיברות



Aseret Ha'dibrot refers to a set of 10 core biblical statements given by God to Moses (and all people) on Mt. Sinai. These statements are basic moral laws we should follow. They are the foundation laws for morality throughout the Western world. The first 4 cover our duties towards God, and the rest between us and other people.



פ

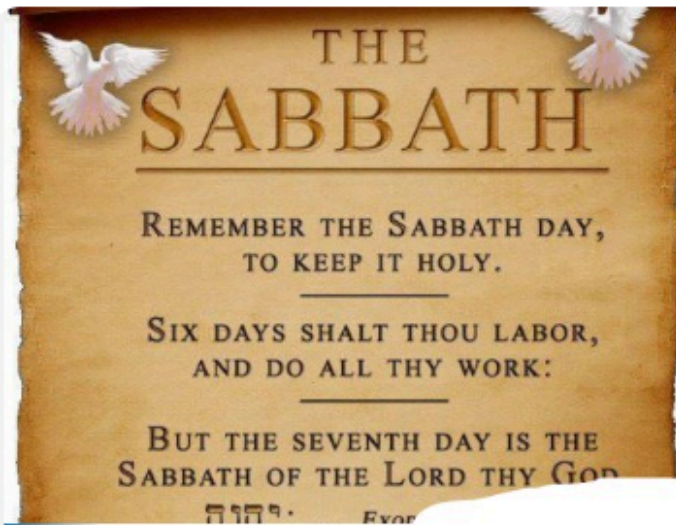
Pay

Pikuah
Nefesh

פיקוּחַ
נֶפֶשׁ

Saving a Life

פיקוח נפש



Pikuach Nefesh
(Sanctity of Life)



Pikuah Nefesh literally means ‘watching over the living being’, and is a basic Jewish principle that preserving life overrides any other religious rule. In Judaism, saving a life is not just a suggestion, but an obligation that takes precedence over all other commandments.



ף

Fay Sofit

Shmirat

שְׁמִירַת

Ha'guf

הַגּוּף

Caring for one's
body

שְׁמִירַת הַגּוּף

Taking Care of Myself



Shmirat HaGuf is the Hebrew for "guarding the body". It is a Jewish commandment and core Jewish value to actively protect your physical health and well-being. Judaism views the body as a sacred, divine gift entrusted to us, making personal health and safety not just a lifestyle choice, but spiritual and religious duty.



צ

Tzadi

Tzedek
Tirdof

צֶדֶק
תִּרְדּוֹף

Pursue Justice

צֶדֶק תִּרְדּוֹף



Tzedek, tzedek tirdof means "Justice, justice shall you pursue" and is a core Torah commandment to actively seek fairness, equity, and righteousness in society. The Hebrew word for justice - *tzedek* - is repeated twice in the quote for emphasis. This teaches that the pursuit of justice is not passive; Jews are commanded to actively fight for - pursue - fairness, equal rights, and protection of the vulnerable. Jewish Supreme Court Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG) was known for her fierce pursuit of justice.



ץ

Tzadi Sofit

Ahavat אַהַבַּת

Ha'aretz הָאֶרֶץ

Love of the Land

אהבת הארץ



Ahavat ha'aretz literally means “love of the land”, but refers to the Jewish connection to the physical land of Israel, to the people who live in it, and to the spiritual connection the land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael) has to the Jewish people.



ק

Kuf

Kehillah

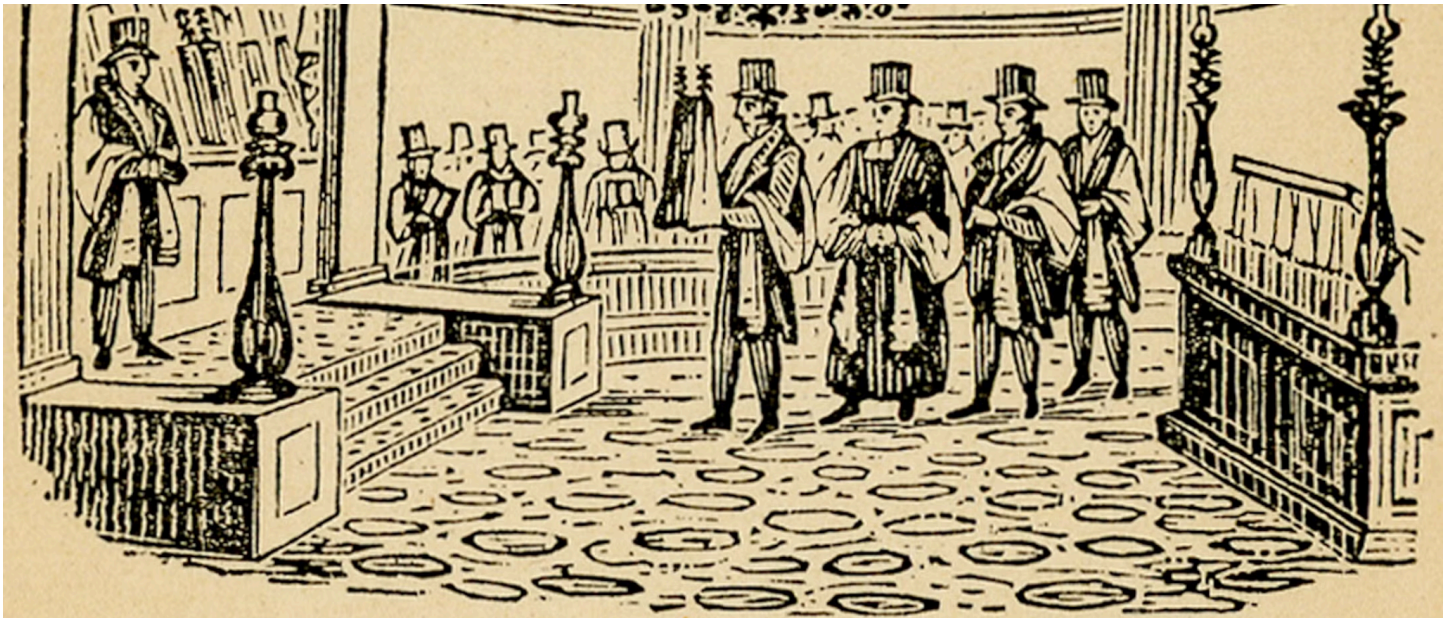
קֹהִילָה

Kedoshah

קְדוּשָׁה

Holy Community

קֹהִילָה קְדוּשָׁה



Cherry Street Synagogue (1825 - 1860) of
K. K. MIKVEH ISRAEL, PHILADELPHIA

Kehillah Kedoshah is Hebrew for "sacred community". This is the Jewish value that a congregation or community should be more than just a social group. It dictates that a community is holy when its members are bound together by holy acts such as doing deeds of loving-kindness, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to ethical and spiritual growth. To this day, many synagogues put the letters Kuf-Kuf (or KK) before their names to signify their mission to be a Kehillah Kedosha. See if you can find this at your shul!



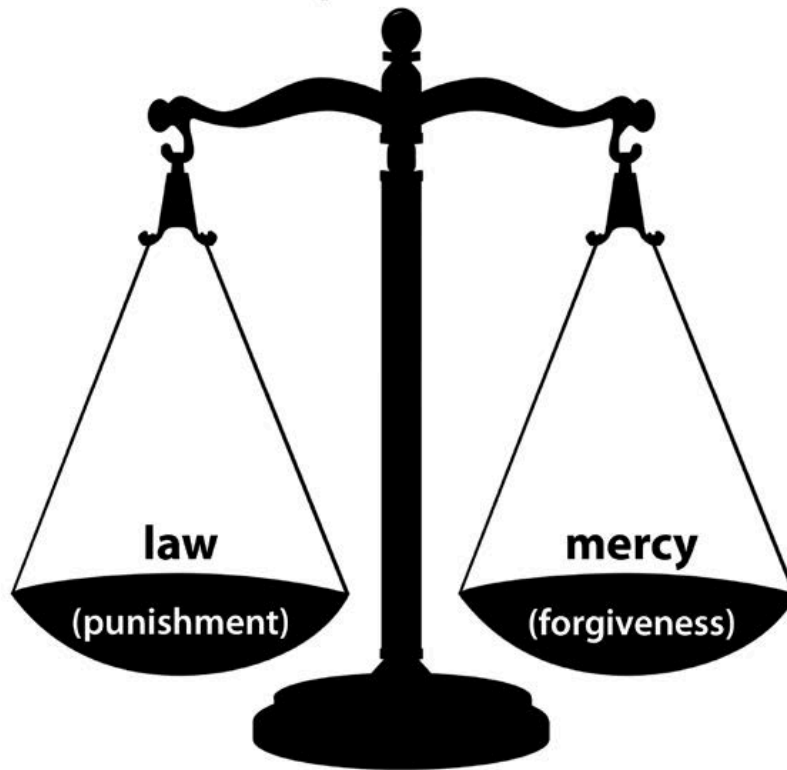
Reysh

Rahamim רַחֲמִים

Mercy, Compassion

רחמים

justice



Rahamim is the Jewish value of compassion and mercy. Derived from the Hebrew word ‘reham’ meaning "womb", it represents an unconditional, nurturing, and empathetic love. It calls for an active, justice-oriented response to the suffering of others, softening strict judgment with forgiveness.



Shin

Shmirah

שְׁמִירָה

Guarding

שמירה

Shmira means "guarding" or "watching". It comes from the Hebrew root

Shin-Mem-Reysh which means protect. In Judaism, there are a number of important mitzvot of guarding:

- ***Shmira*** is the sacred practice of never leaving a deceased person unattended from the moment of death until burial. In the military it is the task of guarding a border, or village.
- ***Shmirat Lashon*** -guarding one's tongue from *Lashon Hara* - "the evil tongue"- is the prohibition against speaking rude or harmful truths about others (gossip), even if the information is entirely accurate
- ***Shmirat ha'teva*** is the Jewish value that positions humanity as the protectors of nature (teva). Since the Garden of Eden, humans are entrusted with protecting earth's resources for future generations.





ת

Tav

Tikkun
Olam

תיקון
עולם

Repair the World



Tikkun Olam refers to the process of repairing or healing the world. In Jewish tradition, it represents the idea that people have the divine responsibility to mend the injustices, inequalities, and brokenness of the world, acting as partners with God to improve society.