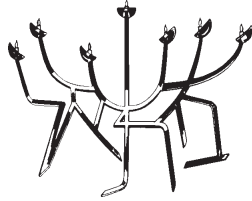


**Beth El Synagogue  
Omaha, Nebraska**



# Vocabulary of Jewish Life

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## Unit I • Life Cycle Events: Birth

1. *Shalom Zakhar* ..... Welcoming a son. Ceremony held on Friday night before *brit milah*.
2. *Brit Milah* ..... Ritual circumcision. Symbol of God's covenant with Abraham and the Jewish people.
3. *Sandek* ..... One who holds the baby during the *brit milah*.
4. *Mohel* ..... Ritual circumciser.
5. *Simhat Bat* ..... Naming celebration for girl.
6. *Seudat mitzvah* ..... Festive meal which accompanies the observance of a *mitzvah*.
7. *Pidyon haben* ..... Redemption of the first born son. Ceremony obtains for a child only when all of the following apply:
  - a. First born child
  - b. No prior abortions or miscarriages
  - c. Male
  - d. Neither parent of a *kohen* or *levi* family.
8. *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* .... Coming of age for religious responsibility. Custom of major party, "*bar*" *mitzvah*, relatively recent.

## Unit II • Life Cycle Events: Marriage

1. *Sefirah* ..... Between *Pesach* and *Shavuot*, the *Omer* is counted. Weddings are not held on a portion of those days.
2. Three weeks ..... Time period between the 17th of *Tammuz* and the 9th of *Av*. Weddings are not held during this time period.
3. *Halitzah* ..... Levirate marriage.
4. *T'na-im* ..... Terms of dowry and marriage.
5. *Aufrufin* ..... Pre-marriage *aliyah* taken before wedding day.
6. *Ketubah* ..... Jewish marriage contract.
7. *Erusin* ..... Engagement portion of marriage ceremony.
8. *Nisu-in* ..... Wedding portion of marriage ceremony.
9. *Huppah* ..... Marriage canopy.
10. *Shevah brakhot* ..... Seven marriage blessings said at the wedding ceremony and at the festive meal afterwards.
11. *Edim* ..... Witnesses
12. *Get* ..... Jewish divorce decree.

## Unit III • Life Cycle Events: Death

1. *Aninut* ..... Time period between death and funeral.
2. *Avel* ..... Mourner
3. *Hevra Kadisha* ..... "Holy Society." Group of people who prepare body for burial through ritual washing.
4. *Kri-ah* ..... Tearing of garment as sign of mourning.
5. *K'vod hamet* ..... Respect for the dead.
6. *Tabrihim* ..... Burial shrouds.

7. *Sh'mirah* ..... Watching the body.
8. *Levayah* ..... Funeral service.
9. *Hesped* ..... Eulogy
10. *Kaddish yatom* ..... Prayer of praise of God, said by mourners.
11. *Shivah* ..... First seven days of mourning.
12. *Sh'loshim* ..... First 30 days of mourning.
13. *Kevarah* ..... Interment
14. *Hesed shel emet* ..... "True lovingkindness;" helping with interment.
15. *Seudat havra-ah* .... Meal of condolence.
16. *T'hiyat hametim* ..... Resurrection of the dead.
17. *Nihum avelim* ..... *Mitzvah* of comforting mourners.
18. *Yahrzeit* ..... Anniversary of date of death.
19. *Yizkor* ..... Memorial service added to services on: *Yom Kippur*,  
*Shmini Atzeret*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot*.
20. *Hiyyuv* ..... A religious obligation.

#### Unit IV • Shabbat

1. *Muktzeh* ..... Items not touched on Shabbat either because they might lead to a violation of Shabbat or because it was not prepared before Shabbat for use on Shabbat.
2. *Melakha* ..... Creative work.
3. *Kiddush* ..... Sanctification of the day, usually said using wine.
4. *Menuha* ..... Rest.
5. *Zemiroth* ..... Special table songs for Shabbat.
6. *Kabbalat Shabbat* ... service of welcome for Shabbat.
7. *Se-udah Shlishit* .... Third meal on Shabbat
8. *Havdalah* ..... Service of separation to mark end of Shabbat.
9. *Motza-i Shabbat* .... Leaving of Shabbat (Saturday night)

#### Unit V • Worship A.

1. *Tefilah* ..... Prayer
2. *Bet midrash* ..... House of Study.
3. *Bet k'nesset* ..... House of Assembly.
4. *Bet tefillah* ..... House of Prayer.
5. *Nosah* ..... Melodic themes of prayer
6. *Kippah* ..... Head covering
7. *Tallit* ..... Prayer shawl
8. *Tzitzit* ..... Knots required in corners of four-corner garments.
9. *Tefillin* ..... Phylacteries
10. *Aron hakodesh* ..... Holy ark, resting place of Torah scrolls.
11. *Bimah* ..... Platform at front of sanctuary.
12. *Shaliah tzibbur* ..... Congregation's representative in prayer. (Cantor)

#### Unit VI • Worship B.

1. *Kavannah* ..... Devotional intent in worship
2. *Kevah* ..... Fixed prayers
3. *Minyan* ..... Quorum of 10 adults required for public worship.
4. *Siddur* ..... Prayer book (except High Holy days)
5. *Mahzor* ..... Prayer book for High Holy days.
6. *Ma-ariv* ..... Evening service.
7. *Shaharit* ..... Morning service.
8. *Musaf* ..... Additional service. Said on Shabbat, *Rosh Hodesh* and major holidays.
9. *Minha* ..... Afternoon service.
10. *P'sukei d'zimra* ..... Introductory morning service.
11. *Brakha* ..... Blessing; basic unit of Jewish prayer.
12. *Amidah* ..... Private prayers, "The Prayer," recited while standing.
13. *Kedusha* ..... Prayer of sanctification in *amidah*.
14. *Kaddish* ..... Prayer of praise; concludes service sections
15. *Korbanot* ..... Sacrifices / section of prayers which reviews sacrifices which were offered.
16. *Hallel* ..... Psalms of praise added to service on selected holidays.
17. *Yom Tov* ..... Festival day - work prohibited.
18. *Hol Hamo-ed* ..... Intermediate festival days.

#### Unit VII • Text and Commentary

1. *Torah* ..... Five books of Moses. Hebrew root means "to guide" or "to teach."
2. *Tanakh* ..... Mnemonic for the Bible: **T**orah; **N**eviim (Prophets); **K**etuvim (Writings)
3. *Pentateuch* ..... Five books of Moses
4. *Decalogue* ..... Ten commandments
5. *Asseret Hadibrot* .... Ten commandments
6. *Talmud Torah* ..... *Mitzvah* of study
7. *Midrash* ..... Rabbinic Commentary, based on Biblical text
8. *Mishnah* ..... Legal text, compiled around 200, by Judah the Prince
9. *Gemara* ..... Commentary on *Mishnah*.
10. *Talmud* ..... Combination of 8 & 9
11. *Mitzvah* ..... Commandment; one of 613; **not a good deed**
12. *Aggadah* ..... Legend
13. *Halakha* ..... Law
14. *Brit* ..... Covenant
15. *Sefer Torah* ..... Torah Scroll
16. *Kiddush HaShem* ... Sanctifying God.
17. *Hillul HaShem* ..... Desecrating God.

## Unit VIII • Holiday Vocabulary - High Holy Days

1. *Yamim Nora-im* ..... Days of Awe
2. *Selihot* ..... Prayers asking Divine forgiveness.
3. *Yom Hadin* ..... Day of Judgment; a name for *Rosh Hashanna*
4. *Yom Hazikarom* ..... Day of Remembering; a name for *Rosh Hashanna*
5. *Yom Teruah* ..... Day of *Shofar* Sound; a name for *Rosh Hashanna*
6. *Avinu Malkeinu* ..... "Our Father, our King," list of brief supplications, all begin with that phrase.
7. *Shevarim* ..... *Shofar* sound: three notes
8. *Tekiah* ..... *Shofar* sound: one blast
9. *Teruah* ..... *Shofar* sound: wavering sound of nine staccato notes
10. *Akedah* ..... "Binding," Biblical account of near-sacrifice of Isaac
11. *Malkhuyot* ..... "Kingship verses," one of three special additional sections added to *Rosh Hashanna Musaf amidah*.
12. *Shofarot* ..... "Shofar verses," one of three special additional sections added to *Rosh Hashanna Musaf amidah*.
13. *Zikhronot* ..... "Remembrance verses," one of three special additional sections added to *Rosh Hashanna Musaf amidah*.
14. *Middat Hadin* ..... God's attribute of Divine justice.
15. *Middat harahamim* God's attribute of Divine mercy.
16. *Piyyut* ..... Religious poem.
17. *Viddui* ..... confession, included in every *Yom Kippur amidah*.
18. *Al Het* ..... Series of confessions, alphabetically arranged, said on *Yom Kippur*.
19. *Kol Nidre* ..... Formula for absolution of vows, said immediately before *Yom Kippur* begins.
20. *Avodah* ..... *Yom Kippur* service of the High Priest in Temple.
21. *Neilah* ..... Final service on *Yom Kippur*.

## Unit IX • Holiday Vocabulary - Sukkot / Shmini Atzeret/ Simhat Torah

1. *Sukkah* ..... Booth erected for *Sukkot*.
2. *Sekhakh* ..... Roofing material for *sukkah*.
3. *Arbah minim* ..... Four plant species used during *Sukkot* services.
4. *Lulav* ..... Palm; also name given for *arbah minim*.
5. *Hadas* ..... Myrtle; twigs (3) used in "lulav."
6. *Arava* ..... Willow; twigs (2) used in "lulav."
7. *Etrog* ..... Citron
8. *Hoshana* ..... "Save, I pray," prayer added each morning during *Sukkot*. Extra verses are added on the last day of *Sukkot*, *Hoshanna Rabbah*.
9. *Hoshana Rabba* ..... Last day of *hol hamo-ed Sukkot*; last chance for repentance.

10. *Geshem* ..... Prayer for rain; said on *Shmini Atzeret* at *Musaf*
11. *Kohelet* ..... Ecclesiastes; *megillah* read on *Sukkot*
12. *Shmini Atzeret* ..... Eighth day of assembly; last day of *Sukkot* but, liturgically, a separate holiday.
13. *Simhat Torah* ..... Rejoicing in the Torah; holiday marking completion and beginning of Torah reading cycle.
14. *Hakkafot* ..... Circuits around sanctuary with Torah Scrolls.

## Unit X • Holiday Vocabulary - Passover

1. *Seder* ..... Special meal of retelling the Exodus from Egypt.
2. *Bedikat Hametz* ..... Search for *hametz*, held night before first *seder*.
3. *Bitul Hametz* ..... Formula renouncing any *hametz* we may have inadvertently missed in our cleaning. Said morning of the first *seder*.
4. *Be'ur Hametz* ..... Destruction of *hametz*, morning of first *seder*, by 11:00.
5. *Siyyum Bekhorim* .... Ceremony of celebration of completing Rabbinic section of study.
6. *Hametz* ..... Fermented; wheat, oats, rye, barley or spelt after they come in contact with water for 18 minutes after harvest. Also dishes and utensils which have been in contact with *hametz* foods during the year.
7. *Mekhirat Hametz* ... Symbolic selling of *hametz* to a non-Jew.
8. *Ma'ot Hittim* ..... Funds collected before *Pesach* to provide money for *matzah* and other Passover essentials for the poor.
9. *Hagadah* ..... Book used at *seder* to retell the story.

## Unit XI • Holiday Vocabulary - Shavuot

1. *Shavuot* ..... Pentecost; feast of weeks. 50 days after second day of *Pesach*.
2. *Bikkurim* ..... First fruits, brought to Temple on *Shavuot*.
3. *Ruth* ..... *Megillah* read on *Shavuot*.
4. *Tikkun Lel Shavuot* All night study session to recall giving of Ten Commandments.

## Unit XII • Holiday Vocabulary - Minor Holidays

1. *Hanukkah* ..... "Dedication," holiday celebrating the victory of the Maccabees against the Assyrian-Greeks.
2. *Hasmoneans* ..... Dynasty of kings set up by Judah the Maccabee.
3. *Menorah* ..... 7 branch candelabra used in Temple.
4. *Hanukkiyah* ..... 9 branch candelabra used for *Hanukkah* celebration.
5. *Al Hanissim* ..... Prayer of thanksgiving added to *amidah* on *Hanukkah* and *Purim*.

6. *Laktes* ..... Potato pancakes; traditional *Hanukkah* meal.
7. *Sufganiot* ..... Jelly doughnuts; traditional *Hanukkah* meal.
8. *Dreidel* ..... Top; used in children's games at *Hanukkah*.
9. *Asara B'Tevet* ..... 10th of *Tevet*. Minor fast day noting start of Babylonian siege of Jerusalem, 587 B.C.E.
10. *Tu Bishevat* ..... Fifteenth of *Shevat*; "new year" for trees.
11. *Purim* ..... Lots; holiday celebrating the victory of Mordecai and Esther over Haman.
12. *Ta-anit Ester* ..... Fast day preceding *Purim*.
13. *Megillat Ester* ..... *Megillah* read on *Purim*.
14. *Mishloah manot* .... Gifts of food (2 kinds) sent to friends on *Purim*.
15. *Matanot le'evyonim* .. Gifts of *tzedakah* given to poor on *Purim*.
16. *Seudat Purim* ..... Special meal of celebration at *Purim's* end.
17. *Omer* ..... Sheaf offering brought to Temple on 16 *Nisan*; name for period between the second day of *Pesach* and *Shavuot*.
18. *Yom Hashoa* ..... Holocaust Commemoration day. 27 *Nisan*.
19. *Yom Hazikaron* ..... Israel Memorial Day. 3 *Iyar*.
20. *Yom Ha-atzmaut* .... Israel Independence Day. 4 *Iyar*.
21. *Lag B'Omer* ..... 33rd day of *omer*. Minor festival day. 18 *Iyar*
22. *Yom Yerushalyim* .... Reunification of Jerusalem, 1967. 28 *Iyar*.
23. *Shevah Asar B'Tammuz* 17th of *Tammuz*; Minor fast day noting Babylonians entering Jerusalem, 587 B.C.E.
24. *Tisha B'av* ..... 9th of Av. Day of mourning for Jewish tragedies, including: loss of two Temples, expulsion from Spain 1492.
25. *Eikha* ..... Lamentations. *Megillah* read on *Tisha B'av*.
26. *Kinot* ..... Dirges of mourning read on *Tisha B'av*.

The 39 major categories of creative activity (work)

prohibited on Shabbat:

- |                    |                             |   |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Sowing          | 16. Spinning                |   |
| 2. Ploughing       | 17. Weaving                 | 29. Curing                                |
| 3. Reaping         | 18. Making two loops        | 30. Scraping                              |
| 4. Binding sheaves | 19. Weaving two threads     | 31. Cutting up                            |
| 5. Threshing       | 20. Separating two threads  | 32. Writing two letters                   |
| 6. Winnowing       | 21. Tying a knot            | 33. Erasing two letters in order to write |
| 7. Cleansing crops | 22. Loosening a knot        | 34. Building                              |
| 8. Grinding        | 23. Sewing two stitches     | 35. Pulling down                          |
| 9. Sifting         | 24. Tearing in order to sew | 36. Putting out a fire                    |
| 10. Kneading       | 25. Hunting                 | 37. Lighting a fire                       |
| 11. Baking         | 26. Slaughtering            | 38. Striking the final hammer blow        |
| 12. Shearing wool  | 27. Flaying                 | 39. Carrying from one domain to another   |
| 13. Washing wool   | 28. Salting                 |   |
| 14. Beating wool   |                             |   |
| 15. Dyeing wool    |                             |   |

Months of the Hebrew Year and their Holidays

<b>Tishri</b>	<b>30 days</b>	
1-2	Rosh Hashanah	Lev. 23: 23-25
3	Fast of Gedaliah	II Kings 25: 22-25
10	Yom Kippur	Lev. 23: 33-36
15-22	Sukkot	Lev. 23: 33-36
22	Shmini Atzeret	
23	Simhat Torah	
<b>Heshvan</b>	<b>29/30 days</b>	
<b>Kislev</b>	<b>29/30 days</b>	
25-29(30)	Hanukkah	Apocrypha - Maccabees
<b>Tevet</b>	<b>29 days</b>	
1-2(3)	end of <i>Hanukkah</i>	
10	Asarah B'Tevet	Zach. 7:5; 8:19
<b>Shevat</b>	<b>30 days</b>	
15	Tu Bishevat	Rabbinic
<b>Adar</b>	<b>30 days (leap year Adar II: 29)</b>	
13	Ta-anit Ester	Book of Esther
14	Purim	Book of Esther
15	Shushan Purim	
<b>Nisan</b>	<b>30 days</b>	
15-23	Pesah	Ex. 12; Lev. 23: 4-8; Deut. 16: 1-8
27	Yom Hashoah Modern	
<b>Iyar</b>	<b>29 days</b>	
3	Yom Hazikaron	Modern
4	Yom Ha-atzma-ut	Modern
18	Lag B'Omer	Rabbinic
28	Yom Yerushalyim	Modern
<b>Sivan</b>	<b>30 days</b>	
6-7	Shavuot	Ex. 19-20; Lev. 23: 15-21; Deut. 16: 9-12
<b>Tammuz</b>	<b>29 days</b>	
17	Sh'va Asar B'Tammuz	Zach. 7:5; 8:19
<b>Av</b>	<b>30 days</b>	
9	Tisha B'av	Jer. 52
<b>Elul</b>	<b>29 days</b>	