

HEBREW – FARSI - JUDAISM GLOSSARY (Transliterated)

Abba – Daddy (Hebrew)

Ahabel – dumbass (Arabic)

Aliyah – immigration to Israel

Ashkenazi – Jews of European ancestry

“Az khar-e sheytoon bia payeen.” Literally, “Come down off the devil’s donkey”; idiomatically, “Get off your high horse.” (Farsi)

Baal teshuva – Jewish person returning to the faith

Baba – Daddy (Farsi)

“Barukh Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam, Dayan HaEmet” - blessing spoken by a Jew upon hearing of the death of a close family member: “Blessed are You O Lord our God, King of the Universe, the True Judge.” The one who delivers the news may respond, “Barukh Dayan Emet,” “Blessed is the True Judge.”

Baruch HaShem – Praise God (Hebrew)

Bebakhshid – Sorry for a mistake; bebakhshid, eshtebah kardam – I’m sorry, I did something wrong (Farsi)

Beit Din – Jewish religious court that settles matters of marriage, divorce, conversion, etc.

Beni – my son (Hebrew)

B’ezrat HaShem – With the help of God (Hebrew)

Birkhat HaCohanim – Priestly blessing prayed over those who attend synagogue service on Shabbat or prayed by fathers over children on Erev Shabbat

Blue-and-White – Israeli

Brakhah/brakhot – blessing/blessings (Hebrew)

Bris/Brit Milah – circumcision ceremony

Buba – Doll (Hebrew)

Chador – Muslim garment worn by women to cover head and conceal upper body

Chagim – Jewish holidays

Challah – special braided bread for Shabbat

Chametz – yeast or leaven, symbolic of pride, sin, etc.

Chanukkiah – special menorah (lamp) used at Chanukkah

Chassid – ultra-orthodox religious Jew

Chaval – tragic (Hebrew)

Chazak! Chazak! N'nitchazek! – “Be strong! Be strong! And may we be strengthened!”

Chesed – lovingkindness

Chillul HaShem – desecration of the Name of God (Hebrew)

Cholent – special stew made for Shabbat to keep warm on a stovetop warmer

Cohen HaGadol – High Priest of Israel, an office filled when the First and Second Temples stood

Dai – Enough (Hebrew)

Dati (ah) – description of a religiously observant Jew/Jewess

Dayeinu – a song sung at the Passover meal, “It Would Have Been Enough,” that celebrates the Divine provision of God for His People

Dooset daaram – I love you (Farsi)

Eretz Yisrael – The Land of Israel (Hebrew)

Erev Shabbat – Friday evening

Frum – religious, tight-laced

Ger tzedek – righteous Gentile (Hebrew) who becomes a Jewish convert

Get or Gett – bill of divorce that may only be initiated by the husband in Jewish law

Glatt kosher – kosher food prepared according to the strictest rabbinic standards

Goy/goyah – a Gentile man/woman (Hebrew)

Haftorah – section of the Prophets read during its assigned week with the parasha, or Torah portion

Halakha – practical Jewish law; for instance, Orthodox Jews refrain from using electricity on Shabbat or turning on and off electrical appliances.

HaNesher – the eagle (Hebrew)

Hareidi- ultra-orthodox Jews

HaShem – literally, “The Name,” a euphemism for the holiest Name of God (Hebrew)

HaTikvah – “The Hope” Israeli national anthem

Haval – pointless, difficult or impossible to understand (Hebrew)

Havdalah – short ceremony marking the end of Shabbat with blessings, wine, smelling pleasant spices, and the extinguishing of a special braided candle

HaYaldah – the girl child (Hebrew)

IAF – Israeli Air Force

IDF – Israeli Defense Force

Ima – Mama (Hebrew)

Jounam – an extreme term of endearment (Farsi)

-jun – Dear. A term of endearment added to a proper name. (Farsi)

Kaddish – a prayer said for a deceased loved one

Kanfot – four-cornered garment containing tzitzit, Jewish ritual fringes

Ken – yes (Hebrew)

Ketubah – formal document delineating terms of a Jewish marriage agreement similar to a prenuptial agreement

Khakhar – sister (Farsi)

Khar – donkey, dumbass (Farsi)

Khahesh mikonam – You’re welcome (Farsi)

Khanevadeh – family (Farsi)

Khodafez – See you later (Farsi)

Kiddush – a cup of sanctification wine used to initiate a Sabbath meal or other holy occasions with special blessings

Kippah (Yarmulke) – skullcap worn by observant Jewish males

Kotel – Wailing Wall, site of the remains of the First and Second Jewish Temples in Jerusalem

Leat – slow (Hebrew)

Lehitraot – Goodbye (Hebrew)

Lo – No (Hebrew)

Mah Shlomeakh? – “How is your peace?” or “How are you?” (Hebrew)

Maariv – Evening prayers

Magen David – Star of David

Maman – Mama (Farsi)

Mamash – Really (Hebrew)

Mamzer – bastard (Arabic)

Matukah, Matok, Motek – “Sweetie,” a term of endearment (Hebrew)

Maspik im zeh – Enough of this (Hebrew)

Mazal tov – usually translated “Good Fortune,” but the expression is better understood as appreciation for a good blessing from Heaven

Me-oo-leh – Excellent (Hebrew)

Metzach nechusha – exceedingly obstinate (Hebrew)

Meyemun – Monkey (Farsi)

Middah neged middah – measure against measure, a phrase of justice

Minchah – afternoon prayer, also called the Amidah or Shmonei Esrei

Mishlei – Book of Proverbs

Mishnah – oldest collection of Jewish oral law

Mitztaer – I’m sorry (Hebrew)

Mitzvah – commandment, good deed (Hebrew)

Mizrachi – Jews of Middle Eastern or “Oriental” ancestry; in the early days of Israel, Mizrahi Jews were often stereotyped as primitive thugs and endured discrimination by their Ashkenazi kin.

Mohel – specialist who performs the circumcision at a brit milah

Motzei Shabbat – the “going out” of Shabbat, or Saturday evening

Nafshim (pl) or Nefesh (sing) – souls, soul (Hebrew)

Naim meod – Nice to meet you (Hebrew)

Najeeb – a quality desired in the Persian culture for young women, characterized by an innocence of sex and worldly things (Farsi)

Netilat yadaim – ritual washing of hands before a meal (Hebrew)

Niddah – days of the menstrual period plus seven days without blood

N’giah – Jewish law that forbids touching the opposite sex who are not family members

Nissan – First Jewish month of the year marked by the celebration of Passover

Notzrim – Christians (Hebrew); equivalent to “Nazarenes”

Onah – the right of a Jewish woman to conjugal relations with her husband

“Oseh Shalom” – A song taken from the final words of the Jewish daily prayer “Make Peace”

Parasha – Section of the Torah traditionally read on its assigned week

Pedar – Father (Farsi)

Pesach – Passover holiday of seven days characterized by the removal of all chametz (leavened) products in the home

Payot – sidelocks of untrimmed hair worn by observant Jewish males

Rabbinate – governing body of rabbis who execute and decide Jewish law in Israel

Rambam/Ramban/Rashi – famous historical Jewish scholars whose opinions are still a source of reference for religious Jews

Ramsad – Director

Rebbe – rabbi

Roshan-fekr – Persian Jews who are described as more modern in their lifestyle as opposed to those who are scrupulously religious (Farsi)

Saba and Savtah – Grandfather and Grandmother (Hebrew)

Sabra – native-born Israeli

Seder – a ceremonial Passover meal

Sephardim – Jews of Spanish or Middle Eastern ancestry

Seudat Shabbat – meal of the Sabbath

Shabbat – Sabbath, the weekly day of rest established in the Tanakh, the Jewish Bible; celebrated from sundown on Friday evening until sundown on Saturday evening; the 7th Day

Shacharit – morning prayers

Shadchan – professional Jewish matchmaker

Shavuot – Feast of Weeks, known to Christians as Pentecost

Sheerzan – lioness (Farsi)

Sheket – shut up (Hebrew)

Shema – basic statement of faith for Jews from the Torah, prayed morning and evening. “Hear O Israel, the LORD your God, the LORD is one...”

Shiksa – Yiddish for female Gentile

Shin Bet – Israel’s internal security service

Shiva – seven days of mourning for a close relative

Shokolad – chocolate

Shomer Torah – observant of the Torah, religious; shomer Shabbat – observant of Shabbat

Shomrim – community “police” who monitor behavior in some ultra-orthodox Jewish neighborhoods

Shuk/souk – market (Heb/Arabic)

Shul – synagogue

Siddur – Jewish prayer book

Slicha – I’m sorry (Hebrew)

Snood – simple headcover worn by Jewish women

Taarof – Persian extreme politeness and courtesies that precede any real business, often thought to be disingenuous by those outside the culture (Farsi)

Tafsiki – imperative to a female, “Stop!” (Hebrew)

Tallit – prayer shawl worn by Jewish males during morning prayer

Tallit katan – four cornered garment with ritual fringes; maybe be worn outside the shirt or as an undergarment.

Tanakh – Jewish Bible consisting of the Torah, Prophets, and Writings; known to Christians as the Old Testament

Talmud – comprehensive collection of Jewish law and commentary

Tefillin – phylacteries worn by Jewish men, usually once per weekday at the morning prayers

Teshuvah – repentance (Hebrew)

The Land - Israel

Tikkun olam – literally “repair of the world”; idiomatically, repairing transgressions

Torah – first five books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Tzaddik – righteous person, although sometimes used sarcastically in modern Israel (Hebrew)

Tzahal – Israeli army

Tzalaf – sniper

Tzitzit – ritual fringes worn by Jewish males; they are affixed to tallits or tallit katans (kanfot)

Tzniut – modesty as interpreted by Jewish law

Uzi-tat makleah – Israeli-manufactured compact submachine gun, or “micro-Uzi”

VEVAK – Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and State Security

Yaffa – beautiful (Hebrew)

Yaldati – “my (female) child” (Hebrew)

Yallah – “Let’s go!” (Arabic)

Yid – slang for Yiddish-speaking Jew

Yiddish - a language used by Jews in central and eastern Europe.

Zaiefeh – derogatory term, “weak woman” (Farsi)

“Zikhrono/zikhrona livrakha” – a blessing spoken upon the name of a deceased loved one (Hebrew)

Ziv panim – brightness of the face, used in connection with a person who keeps the Sabbath day completely and fully, deriving satisfaction from it (Hebrew)

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