



Glossary

Of Hebrew and Aramaic Terms

Aggadah *ag-ab-DAH* אגדה

Non-legal material in the Talmud: stories, ethics, theology, and homiletics.

Amora *ah-MOR-ab* אמורא

A sage of the Gemara (c. 200–500 CE).

Amud *ab-MOOD* עמוד

One side of a *daf*; literally "column."

Baraisa *bah-RYE-sah* ברַייתא

A Tannaitic teaching that was not included in Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi's Mishnah but is preserved elsewhere.

Bavli *BAV-lee* בבלי

The Babylonian Talmud, compiled in the academies of Bavel. When "the Talmud" is mentioned without qualification, the Bavli is intended.

Bein Hashemashos *bayn hab-shub-MAH-shos* בין השמשות

Twilight: the transitional period between sunset and nightfall, whose status as day or night is left in doubt. Its length is itself disputed. R' Yehuda holds it is a substantial interval; R' Yose holds it is momentary, "like the blink of an eye." The distinction between those two views drives the Rabbi Meir / Rabbi Yehuda exchange in Chapter Thirteen.

Beis Din *bays DIN* בית דין

A rabbinic court.

Beis HaMikdash *bays hab-mik-DASH* בית המקדש

The Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Berachah *bub-rab-chAH* בְּרָכָה

A blessing.

Chazakah *chab-zab-KAH* חֲזָקָה

A legal presumption that a prior state remains until proven otherwise.

Chazal *chab-ZAL* חֲז"ל

Acronym for *Chachameinu Zichronam Livracha*: "our Sages, of blessed memory."

Daf *DAF* דָּף

A folio page of the Talmud, comprising two sides (*amudim*).

Dechayah *dub-chee-YAH* דִּחְיָה

A rejection or limitation of a proof.

Drash *DRASH* דִּרָשׁ

Homiletical or exegetical interpretation, as distinct from the plain meaning.

D'Oraisa *d'oh-RYE-sab* דְּאוֹרַיִסָּא

By Torah law.

D'Rabbanan *d'rah-bab-NAN* דְּרַבָּנָן

By Rabbinic law.

Gemara *gub-MAR-ab* גְּמָרָא

The Aramaic commentary and analysis on the Mishnah; with the Mishnah, it forms the Talmud.

Gezeira Shava *gub-ZAY-rab SHAH-vab* גְּזֵירָה שְׁוָה

An exegetical rule: deriving a law by comparing two passages that share a distinctive word.

Halacha *bab-lab-chAH* הֲלָכָה

Jewish law; the operative ruling.

Kal v'Chomer *kal v'chOH-mer* קַל וְחֹמֶר

An *a fortiori* argument: if X applies in a lighter case, it certainly applies in a heavier one.

Kohanim *kob-bab-NEEM* כֹּהֲנִים

Descendants of Aharon HaKohen, with distinct service responsibilities.

Krias Shema *kree-YAS shub-MAH* קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע

The twice-daily recitation of the *Shema*.

L'Halacha *luh-bab-lah-chAH* לְהִלְכָּה

For practical law; what the operative ruling is.

L'Maaseh *luh-MAH-seh* לְמַעֲשֵׂה

In practice; how something is actually done.

Maseches / Masechta *mah-SEH-ches / mah-SEch-tab* מַסְכָּת / מַסְכְּתָא

A tractate. The Talmud comprises sixty-three.

Maskanah *mas-kah-NAH* מְסָקְנָה

The settled conclusion of a sugya.

Mesorah *muh-sob-RAH* מְסֹרָה

The chain of authoritative transmission of Torah from generation to generation.

Mishnah *MISH-nah* מִשְׁנָה

The concise written record of the Oral Torah compiled by Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi.

Perek *PEH-rek* פֶּרֶק

A chapter of a tractate.

Peshat *pub-SHAT* פְּשָׁט

The plain, straightforward meaning of a text.

Psak *p'SAK* פְּסָק

A binding halachic ruling.

Raayah *rah-AH-yah* רְאִיָּה

A proof or supporting argument.

Savoraim *sab-vob-rah-EEM* סְבוּרָאִים

Post-Amoraic scholars (c. 500–700 CE) who made final editorial additions to the Talmud.

Seder / Sedarim *SEH-der / sub-dab-REEM* סֵדֶר / סְדָרִים

One of the six Orders of the Mishnah; their plural.

Sevara *svah-RAH* סְבָרָא

Logical reasoning, often standing on its own as a basis for halacha.

Shakla v'tarya *SHAK-lah v'TAR-yah* שְׁקָלָא וְטָרְיָא

The give-and-take of Talmudic argument.

Shas *SHAS* ש"ס

Acronym for *Shisha Sidrei Mishnah*, the six Orders. By extension, the entire Talmud.

Shaylah *SHAY-lah* שְׂאֵלָה

A question; the move by which the Gemara identifies a problem.

Shechita *shub-chee-TAH* שְׁחִיטָה

Ritual slaughter; one of the classic examples of halacha that requires the Oral Torah to explain.

Stammaim *stab-mah-EEM* סְתָמָאִים

The anonymous editors whose voice weaves together the Gemara's discussions.

Sugya *SOO-gyah* סוּגְיָא

A self-contained Talmudic discussion; the basic unit of Gemara study.

Tamei *tab-MAY* טָמֵא

Ritually impure; the opposite of *tahor*. A Kohen who became *tamei* may not eat *teruma* until he immerses in a *mikveh* and nightfall arrives. See *Tumah / Tahara*.

Tanna *TAN-ab* תַּנָּא

A Mishnaic sage (c. 10–220 CE).

Teiku *TAY-koo* תֵּיְקוּ

A question left unresolved; traditionally read as an acronym indicating that *Tishbi* (Eliyahu HaNavi) will one day resolve such questions.

Teretz *teh-RETS* תִּירוּץ

An answer; the move by which the Gemara proposes a resolution.

Teruma *tub-roo-MAH* תְּרוּמָה

A portion of produce set aside for a Kohen, eaten in a state of ritual purity.

Tosefta *tob-SEF-tah* תוספתא

A parallel collection of Tannaitic teachings organized alongside the Mishnah; literally "addition."

Tumah / Tahara *too-MAH / tab-bah-RAH* טומאה / טהרה

Ritual impurity and purity.

Tzuras HaDaf *tsoo-RAHS hab-DAF* צורת הדף

"The form of the page": the standard layout of the printed Vilna Talmud.

Yerushalmi *yuh-roo-SHAL-mee* ירושלמי

The Jerusalem (or Palestinian) Talmud, compiled in Eretz Yisrael.

Zocheh *ZOH-cheh* זוכה

Merited; privileged to attain.

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