

# Glossary of Terms:

**TaNakh:** An acronym for the Hebrew Bible. T is for Torah (the Five Books of Moses). N is for “nevi'im” or Prophets, and Kh Is for “ketuvim”, or the Writings, from the Hebrew root “k-t-v”, to write.

**Torah:** Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

**Prophets:** Joshua, Judges, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Hagai, Zechariah and Malachi.

**The Writings:** Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles.

**Chumash:** Another word for Torah, comes from the Hebrew word for five – chamesh, it is the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

**Talmud:** The Talmud is a collection of post-Temple writings, opinions, commentary, philosophy, legal rulings, and more; all based on the Hebrew Bible. It is composed of two major sections: the Mishnah and the Gemorah. There are two Talmuds, actually – the Babylonian (Bavli) Talmud, written by sages from Babylon (the Diaspora at the time), and the Jerusalem Talmud, (Yerushalmi), written largely by sages in the Holy Land. The writings of scholars throughout the Middle Ages and later have been added to it.

**Mishnah:** The Mishnah was compiled around the end of the 2nd century CE, by Rabbi Judah the Patriarch, after the destruction of the Temple. It has multiple voices and opinions, and deals primarily with legal tradition and practical life. The Mishnah is divided into six orders; each order is divided into tractates; each tractate is divided into chapters; and each chapter has a number of laws. This structure became the template for all of subsequent Talmudic literature.

**Gemorah:** Part of the Talmud, the Gemorah provides proof texts for the laws, explains differences between Biblical and Rabbinic laws, and includes both legal and narrative (stories, philosophy, theology, etc.) text.

**Pirke Avot:** A collection of wisdom from the Mishnah that addresses ethical behavior and interpersonal relationships.

**Shulchan Aruch:** In Hebrew, the “Prepared Table,” a code of law written by Joseph Caro in 16th-century Spain. After the expulsion, Caro felt there was a need to clarify Sephardic Jewish practice.