



SHINING OUR LIGHT
IDXSTRONGER!
THE ASERET HANDBOOK

 aseret

Stand Up!

October 7th and the rise of antisemitism around the world has shocked the Jewish people. It's a very confusing and trying time. How will we get through this? How should we respond?

We must stand up to the darkness and hate, educate the ignorant, and seek political and legal protections. Yet, we also need a spiritual response. Deep down, those who hate us do so because of what we stand for – it's our light they resist. The best response, and the Jewish response, to the post-October 7 world is to be even more Jewish. To live proudly according to our values and beliefs. To respond to being put down by standing stronger, ten times stronger. To respond to those trying to extinguish our light by shining our light ten times brighter.

10X Stronger:

Jews, Judaism, and Jewish history are indeed complex, but our essence and origin are straightforward. At the singular, monumental moment at Mt. Sinai, we received ten simple yet profound commandments revealing what a free and responsible society can achieve. These teachings show us how to find individual elevation and meaning and, together, create an exemplary society that serves as a beacon of light for all humanity. This is what it means to be Jewish. Every Jew who ever strived to make the world better has been working toward this vision. It's the gift we've carried to every land we've inhabited and the covenantal mission we are bound to. It is our meaning. The Ten Commandments are our foundation stones, each one a master key to unlocking how we can be ten times stronger.

Now!

Now is the time for every Jewish person, wherever we are, to unite around a single mission: to return to our core principles and identity and shine our light as brightly as possible.

By living with the clarity and conviction that the Core Values of the Ten Commandments give us, we can respond in an extraordinary way and actually emerge Ten Times Stronger!

It is time for every Jew to take responsibility for creating this reality.

Aseret is Hebrew for Ten. The Torah calls the Ten Commandments *Aseret HaDevarim* - The Ten Statements, hinting at their general nature.

The Aseret Movement is a worldwide movement of people committed to shining their light by living with the Core Values of the Ten Commandments.

For more information, go to aseret.org



לא תחמד
Do Not Covet
The light of joy

Coveting, or envy, undermines our happiness and distracts us from our true goals.

It traps us in a false reality of feeling unfairly deprived of what others have and causes us to forget about the unique blessings and opportunities we have. Being happy with our lot is the secret to overcoming envy, finding true wealth, and living a joyful life.

We can free ourselves from the chains of envy by recognizing our individuality: our unique character, potential, challenges, and circumstances that make up our one-time life. We are not meant to be the same. God made us unique because each one of us has a unique light to shine: to contribute distinctively to the world around us. When we embrace life with this attitude, a wellspring of gratitude and creativity opens up inside of us, and life becomes particularly meaningful.

On his deathbed, the saintly sage Zusha was found weeping uncontrollably. His students, trying to comfort him, pointed out that he was almost as wise as Moses and as kind as Abraham, so surely he would be judged favorably in Heaven. Zusha replied, "When I get to Heaven, I will not be asked 'Why weren't you like Moses?' or 'Why weren't you like Abraham?' They will ask, 'Why weren't you like Zusha?' And then what will I say?" We can learn from others, but we cannot become them.

Embracing our individuality allows us to make life's major decisions, like where we live, what careers we choose, and who our friends and partners are, clearly. It also allows us to find meaning and joy in our day-to-day, minute-to-minute lives. No matter how small, in every situation, there is a path on which we will shine our light the brightest. When we discover these paths, big and small, we find our unique purpose, and start to love life.

The corollary of envy is, "Love your neighbor like yourself." We relate best to each other when we recognize and celebrate the different lights each one of us is capable of shining. When we do that as a nation, when each person has the freedom to shine their own light, our many lights unite to shine one light in the form of a prism of dazzling beauty. On October 7 and the days after, we felt this - all of the differences that make us unique no longer divided us. It felt natural to be one with the nation and, at the same time, keenly aware of our individual roles. Tragically, our inherent unity was exposed by an external enemy. To live with the reality of one nation with one heart, we need to do the work of loving others as we love ourselves - to recognize and celebrate each person's light.

Start by adopting living your unique life joyfully as a core value.

Introspection:

- What are your unique qualities and challenges?
- What opportunities do you have to contribute distinctively to the needs of the Jewish people at this time?



לא תענה ברעך עד שקר

Do Not Be A False Witness

The light of truth

“And God said, let there be light.” God created the universe with speech. As beings created in God's image, we, too, create our reality with speech. With words, we transform ideas into action and allow for collaboration, but more importantly, we share truths or lies.

From our earliest years, we are acutely aware of things just and unjust, and we spontaneously stand up for justice and fight injustice. Yet, as we age, we learn the power of deceit – to lie in order to justify injustices and to rationalize to allow almost any evil. By ignoring context, we tell half stories in order to turn defenders into offenders. We ignore the future in order to enjoy the present without any burden of responsibility. We choose not to inquire about people's intentions in order to label them how we want to. We speak in echo chambers so that nobody challenges our lies. When we preclude the truth we pervert justice.

There is only one way we can create a just society – through a commitment to truth, all the way up from the most vulnerable to the most powerful. Being courageous enough to say what is true and admit when we don't know. Listening to others with the belief that they might have the truth or some of it. Speaking in tones of mutual respect. The right words at the right time are transformative. Checking for context and discerning intention before we speak and share is essential for bringing the light of truth into the world.

In our daily interactions with family, friends, and colleagues, what we truly seek is positive and peaceful relationships. To achieve these, we sometimes need to look beyond the facts and forgive. We destroy relationships through *lashon hara*—badmouthing and gossip, even if it's true, unless it is to save someone innocent from harm. Conversely, we build relationships through *lashon*

hatov – speech that is reassuring, comforting, and encouraging. Committing to speaking for the sake of positive relationships draws with it a zest for life and is key to creating the beautiful relationships we want.

“Death and life are in the hands of the tongue.”

Start by adopting truth as a core value.

Introspection:

- When is speaking the truth most important to you?
- How has the way information has been disseminated impacted the rise of antisemitism since Oct 7? What can you do to stem this trend?



לא תגנוב
Do Not Steal
The light of honesty

Theft is a direct affront to the basic rights of people and nations in a free world. Denying others autonomy over themselves, their land, property, and opinions is to deny them their rightful place in our world. The three forms of theft: kidnapping, property theft, and deceit for benefit (including brainwashing) are the classic methods used by thieves and totalitarian regimes to rob their subjects and enemies of their possessions, autonomy, and dignity.

It is our collective duty to respect the right of possession in each other. We do this by engaging with one another through consent rather than manipulation and by conducting our transactions in good faith. Charging fairly for what we sell and paying graciously for what we receive.

We honor individuals and allow them to flourish when given them space and time to do so. We honor nations by respecting their right to exist.

Making honest gains is key to our inner sense of dignity and worth. Dishonest gains are short-lived and soon result in net losses. Gains achieved through cheating, falsifying, and cutting corners are never worth it in the long run.

Start by adopting dealing honestly as a core value.

Introspection:

- Which elements of dealing honestly are most important to you?
- What do you see as the biggest issues around theft at this time?

לא תנאף

Do Not Commit Adultery

The light of loyalty



Commitments are the hidden threads that bind our relationships. The more committed we are, the stronger the bonds become, allowing trust to form and love to flourish. Our commitments, however, are only as powerful as we are faithful to keep them; when we do, we shine the light of loyalty.

"Do not commit adultery" speaks to the basic commitment of physical exclusivity in marriage. However, that is only where marriage starts. Beautiful marriages happen when each spouse embraces the covenant of marriage - full dedication to each other, so that each spouse sees themselves as part of a whole called family.

Healthy children feel secure, have a strong sense of belonging, and learn from a young age that it takes work to create anything meaningful. These lessons are learned and feelings nurtured better in a stable home than anywhere else. Family loyalty is often not easy, but when achieved, it is a priceless building block for a healthy society.

Every relationship carries some level of commitment, whether explicit or implicit. "Do not commit adultery" calls on us to recognize all our commitments, communicate when we can't keep them, and go over and above what is expected of us when we can. As Jews, we are called to make a special effort to take care of each other, recognize our shared destiny, support our homeland, and unite around our mission to shine a beacon of light for the whole world.

We must control our desires to create the relationships we want. Being faithful takes work, especially when other opportunities present themselves. Sometimes, the effort required to be faithful is great; however, it is in these times that being faithful is most meaningful.

Introspection:

- Can you describe your loyalty towards to Israel and the Jewish people?
- Who are the people you have committed yourself to the most?



לא הרצח
Do Not Murder
The light of peace

Murder is the ultimate violation of life itself. Humans are created in God's image, capable of unique creativity and kindness. The converse of murder is nurturing life through peace. Peace starts with a lack of conflict but ends with wholeness, creating opportunities where we can for all of us to live fully and actualize our potential.

Societies cannot tolerate murder. To thrive, they need peace. In Israel, we greet and say goodbye to each other by saying *Shalom* – peace. We come in peace and leave with a blessing for peace. A commitment to peace means that we seek to work out our conflicts through non-violent means. It also means we understand that ultimate peace, wholeness, can only be achieved through respectful collaboration. As unfortunate as it is, killing murderers in self-defense is the correct thing to do. Sometimes, the only way to ensure that we can shine our light is to eliminate those who want to stamp it out.

Nurturing life starts with health, safety, and security. But life is not limited to the physical realm. It unfolds on multiple levels: physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. The true richness of life emerges when we nurture all these aspects. Fostering emotional well-being is essential for overall well-being, as is engaging in worthwhile intellectual pursuits. According to Moses, cultivating a strong spiritual bond with God is the most important aspect of living a full life.

On a personal level, a commitment to our own holistic health and inner peace inspires us to establish routines and practices that nurture our well-being—eating healthily, exercising regularly, getting sufficient sleep, driving safely, connecting often with family and friends, pursuing continuous learning, engaging in discussions, dedicating time to spiritual contemplation and growth. Focused on others, it entails extending these nurturing practices in the service of helping others live as fully as they can.

“Do Not Murder” calls us to live peacefully, nurturing life, allowing our lives and the lives of others to shine to their fullest potential.

Start by adopting living peacefully as a core value.

Introspection:

- In which ways do you nurture life for yourself and for others?
- What needs to be done to bring about a more peaceful existence for the Jewish people?

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כְּבֹד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ

Honor your father and mother The light of belonging

Our biological parents give us life. They or others provide us with our needs and wants until we can provide for ourselves; they teach us life's essential lessons. These are the people who we owe the most to. They are our personal heroes who infuse our lives with purpose, helping us find our light. By acknowledging the riches they give us, our life is enriched.

We honor and respect all these people based on the gratitude we owe them and the esteem we have for them. When they age, we get to take care of them.

As we think about our identity through a wider lens, we extend honor to our grandparents and the generations before them who form the long familial chain that connects us back to the generation that left Egypt and received our eternal mission at Sinai.

Amongst all the families on earth, we belong to the family most responsible for shining the timeless light of Sinai. The fact that anyone who wants to accept responsibility to shine this light can join the family shows that more than our blood binds us, our mission binds us. By honoring our parents and those before them, we come to see each other as relatives bound in a multi-generational effort to shine a light on this world.

Honoring our parents also connects us to the land of Israel. Israel is our homeland because God gifted it to our forefathers as an eternal inheritance. Only in Israel are we free to shine our own light together as a beacon of light for all humanity. This is our legacy.

Start by adopting the core value of living with legacy!

Introspection:

- Jewish unity is vital at this time, what can be done to strengthen a sense of belonging among the Jewish people?
- Who are the people you are most indebted to?
- How can you express your gratitude to them?

זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לִקְדָּשׁוֹ

Remember the Sabbath

The light of connection

4

Once a week, we stop manipulating and changing the world in order to rejuvenate and connect with each other and our higher purpose.

We need to take breaks from productive work for many reasons, one of which is for the sake of productivity itself. During downtime, our bodies recuperate, and our minds reboot. It is often during these times that we have our most creative thoughts. Furthermore, we take breaks in order to regain the motivation for productivity.

By deciding to stop working we make a powerful statement that there is something more important than work—our higher purpose. We do not live to work; we work to live. Shabbat is a day set aside for living. On it we get to connect with our family, friends, and community. Prepared properly, a Shabbat meal shared with loved ones around delicious foods and elevating conversations, without any distractions or important meetings to run to, is simply a delight; the experience of togetherness.

On Shabbat we also get to connect spiritually. We are reminded that we live in a created purposeful world by resting as God rested after forming the world in six days. On Shabbat we often have the time necessary to contemplate and connect to the wonder of existence itself, and think about where our lives are going, what our purpose is, and how to radiate the light we are capable of shining.

Shabbat is also a celebration of our freedom. A slave can not decide when not to work. Oppressive and totalitarian regimes have often forced Jews to work on Shabbat in an attempt to stifle them. On Shabbat we declare our freedom and respect the freedom of everyone else. We model a free society taking responsibility to create a good society.

On Shabbat and during all other sacred times, we remember what has eternal value and what does not; what the means are, and what the end is. We remember where we are, who is important to us, and that we are all in this together.

Shabbat is a blessed source of light and connection for the entire week.

Start by adopting Shabbat as one of your core values

Introspection:

- At this time, community connection is vital, how can we do this on Shabbat?
- What can you do to find more social and spiritual connection on Shabbat?

לא תשא את שם יהוה אלהיך לשוא
God's Name in Vain
The light of pride

3

People who strive for greatness hold themselves to a golden and sacred standard. This standard must be unforgiving and remain unchangable regardless of whether it is met or not. "Do not bear God's name in vain" holds us to the highest standard.

On the most basic level, not bearing God's name in vain instructs us never to use God's name in vain, for example by taking a false oath. God's name is our standard for truth; falsifying or trivializing it strips it of its meaning and leaves us with no standard at all. On a deeper level, not bearing God's name in vain holds us to our highest calling. We bear a great mission: the Divine calling to shine a great light—as individuals, for ourselves and for those we live with, as a people in Israel, for society, and for all humanity. This light, our covenantal mission, contained in the Torah, calls us to everything beautiful and good: truth, justice, and love; elevating all our relationships – to others, god, and self. It is why studying, understanding, and clarifying the light of the Torah is at the heart of Judaism.

At this time, with so much negativity being cast our way, do not bear God's name in vain calls us to bear our great mission with great pride. With all humility, we must stand up in full appreciation of the pleasantness of our ways and the peacefulness of our ways. We have nothing to be ashamed by but the shame of not living up to our calling.

Start by adopting living proudly as a Jew as one of your core values.

Introspection:

- What can be done to increase Jewish pride at this time?
- How do you balance pride and humility?



לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני

No Other Gods Before Me

The light of focus

Idolatry is so bad because it is a lie about power, specifically who or what has the power to provide for our needs and wants. Our tradition calls other gods false gods because they purport to be able to provide for us but they can't.

Our choices carry profound significance because we are constantly faced with this very real option of making a good or bad impact on ourselves, others, and the world. The worst choice we can make is to choose mistaken values. Inevitably that is what a false god represents. False values not only influences countless other choices but lead us to focus everything on what we erroneously believe will bring us ultimate fulfillment, and that is a grave misfortune.

Standing up against other gods means being unequivocal about what is light and dark, good and bad. "Judaism is not faith as an illusion, seeing the world through rose-tinted lenses as we would wish it to be. It is faith as relentless honesty, seeing evil as evil and fighting it in the name of life, and good, and God." Our world is currently one of chaos and confusion. Israel's existential defense has been turned into an attack and even a genocide, and all Jews, no matter where, are hated and held responsible. Now is the time be focused: to proudly say and do what we know is right, no matter what lies about power are screamed in our faces.

Besides our enemies from without, we also have an enemy within each one of us. This dark, false god must be fought as well. The evil inclination, in Hebrew, yeitzer hara, tempts us with the allure of pleasure, fame, and power. Though these are legitimate drives, they are only there to be used wisely in order to amplify our inner light, but they are not ultimate goals. They will not and cannot provide us with true fulfillment. Our focus in one, our purpose singular: to better ourselves and better the world, to shine our unique lights, and collectively illuminate the world as a beacon of light.

Start by adopting a focus on true values as one of your core values.

Introspection:

- Which mistaken ideas being spread on the internet and through social media are the most dangerous at this time?
- What focus is most important for the Jewish people and for you personally at this time?



אֲנִכִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים

I am the Lord Your God

The light of kindness

"I am the Lord (*HaShem*), your God who took you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery," is God's opening message to us at Sinai. It is both positive and hopeful. Things can change for the better! That is what God is interested in; that is His plan for the world, and that is what He wants from us.

However, in order to make the world a better place, we needed to be free. In this commandment, God is telling us: In Egypt, you lived under an authoritarian regime, were held low, and were forced to fulfill the will of its leaders; now, you are free. I place before you the great opportunity and obligation to use your freedom to bring about positive change in the world. What God started, we must finish.

Since accepting God's offer, when allowed, Jews have been at the forefront of science and industry, striving to better understand our world and developing technologies to meet our wants and needs more efficiently. More significantly, however, we have led with our most powerful idea: that human change for the better is the most important change we can make. Our world improves most when we all strive to live principled lives, elevate our characters, and treat others well.

Focusing on others and setting aside selfishness is key for bettering our world. By sharing the best of ourselves and using our unique talents and abilities for the causes that matter most, we create tremendous benefits for all. The vision for Israel, from the time of Abraham and Sarah until today, is a society founded on the principle of giving, in Hebrew, *chesed*.

Besides being a powerful tool for happiness and combating depression and anxiety, contributing to something greater than ourselves is where we find true meaning in life. Putting others first requires courage and self-sacrifice, however, the blessings and profound meaning we gain from it far outweigh any of its costs. When God instructed Abraham to leave his birthplace for the land of Israel, He blessed him with children, wealth, and fame. Yet, his greatest blessing was to “be a blessing.” We have inherited this blessing.

Start by adopting *chesed*, kindness to others, as one of your core values.

Introspection:

- Who are the people you can be of greatest service to at this time?
- How have you been blessed through the kindnesses you do?

Ten for Ten

Ten minutes for the Ten Commandments every day

Ten for Ten is a daily review and deepening of your connection to the Ten Commandments.

1. Read each commandment aloud.
2. Think about each one's principles as you go.
3. Note which commandment/s speak to you daily. (Suggestion: keep an Aseret diary and write down your thoughts).
4. Recite the *Shema* to affirm your commitment to living with the Ten Commandments as your core values.

**וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לְךָ אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה
עַל־שְׁנֵי לְחֻצוֹת אֲבָנִים**

**And He told you HIS COVENANT, which He commanded you to do, TEN STATEMENTS, and He wrote them on two stone tablets.
(Devarim 4:13)**

#1

**אֲנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים
I am the Lord (HaShem), your God who took you out of the
land of Egypt, from the house of slavery**

I will live with awe and find wonder.

I seek always to be aware of God and His role in our lives.

I can emulate God through acts of kindness.

#2

**לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים עַל פְּנֵי
Do not have any other gods in My presence**

I will live with focus and find fulfillment.

God, the ultimate power and highest authority, is the source of my fulfillment. I will endeavor not to look for it anywhere else.

#3

**לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת שֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוּא
Do not take the name of the Lord (HaShem), your God, in vain**

I will live elevatedly and experience holiness.

God's name is sacred, and I aim always to treat it and anything associated with it that way. This includes the Torah and the Jewish people, as we carry His name.

#4

**זְכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ
Remember the Shabbat to sanctify it**

I will live rejuvenatingly and with clarity.

Shabbat is a day for spiritual and physical rejuvenation and clarification.

I undertake to prepare, celebrate, and keep Shabbat.

#5

**כָּבֵד אֶת אָבִיךָ וְאֶת אִמְךָ
Honor your father and mother**

I will live with legacy and experience belonging.

I will ensure the well-being of my parents and honor them and my other teachers and carers through furthering the legacy of Judaism which I have received from them.

#6

לא תרצח

Do Not Murder

I will live creatively so that I live fully.

Every person is created in the image of God. I am committed to taking care of and nurturing my life and the lives of others in all its dimensions: physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual.

#7

לא תבאף

Do Not Commit Adultery

I will live faithfully and experience love.

Loyalty is the foundation for good relationships. It requires overcoming our selfishness.

I choose to be loyal in all my relationships.

#8

לא תגנב

Do Not Steal

I will deal honestly so that I live with dignity.

People possess mind, body, and property.

I will respect and take care of my possessions and those of others.

#9

לא תענה ברעך עד שקר

Do Not Be A False Witness

I will speak positively so that I live positively.

Speech is our most powerful tool. I desire to use my speech effectively for positive consequences.

#10

לא תחמד

Do Not Covet

I will live gratefully and happily.

God has made us all individuals with unique challenges and opportunities.

I will constantly work on seeing my life and that of others as a gift.

וחכי הוא ודאי והיו הדברים האלה כללא דעשר אמירן אינון
And this is certain, "And these statements" refer to the Ten
Commandments
(Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, Zohar)

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד

ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד. ואחבת את יהוה אלהיך בכל לבבך
ואבך כל נפשך ובכל מאדך והיו הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוך היום על לבבך
ושננתם לבניך ודברת בם בשבתך בביתך ובליכתך בדרך ובשכבך ובקומך
וקשרתם לאות על ידך והיו לטטפת בין עיניך. וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך
ובשעריך

Hear, Israel, the Lord (HaShem) is our God, the Lord
(HaShem) is One

Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom forever
You shall love the Lord (HaShem) your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your might. And these statements
which I command you today shall be upon your heart. Teach
them to your children and speak about them when you stay at
home, are on the way, lie down, and rise. Bind them as a sign on
your hand and let them be a symbol between your eyes. And
write them on the doorposts of your house and your gates.