

Talmud Torah Text Study תלמוד תורה

The text below is called *Eilu Devarim*, which means “these are the things.” The list of *mitzvot* (commandments) that follows is nearly 2000 years old and is found in the Mishnah, our earliest collection of Jewish law. The list details *mitzvot* that remind us not only of what it means to lead a Jewish life, but also things we are commanded to do for our family and our community.

Eilu Devarim as translated from our *siddur*/prayer book:

These are things that are limitless,
Of which a person enjoys the fruit of the world,
While the principal remains in the world to come.
They are: honoring one’s father and mother,
Engaging in deeds of compassion,
Arriving early for study, morning and evening,
Dealing graciously with guests, visiting the sick,
Providing for the wedding couple,
Accompanying the dead for burial,
Being devoted in prayer,
And making peace among people.
But the study of Torah encompasses them all.

Questions for Discussion (younger children):

1. *Eilu Devarim* teaches us we have things we must do for our family and our community. How does the Torah say we should we treat people in our family? People in our community?
2. *Eilu Devarim* is supposed to be said every morning. Why do you think we need to be reminded every day how to treat people?
3. What is one thing you can do this week to treat people in the way the Torah hopes we will?

Questions for Discussion (older children):

1. The text above lists nine mitzvot. If you had to pick one, which one do you think is the most important? Why? How do doing the things above make us better people?
2. The text ends by telling us that “the study of Torah encompasses them all.” How does the study of Torah equal these important *mitzvot*?
3. If you could add something to this list, something that we should be commanded to do for our family or community, what would you add? Why?