



DAYS OF COMMEMORATIONS & CELEBRATIONS

These modern Jewish days invite us to honor memory, take responsibility, and celebrate the resilience of the Jewish people. Our history is clear: how we respond as individuals, families, and communities to our most challenging moments has shaped us into a people of strength, creativity, and hope.

As a mother, you play a key role in passing this spirit of resilience forward. The explanation and activity we offer here for each day below includes a simple, accessible way to bring meaning home to your family.



YOM HASHOAH

APRIL 13



Yom HaShoah marks the destruction wrought by the Holocaust on the Jewish people and remembers both the millions who were murdered and the acts of courage and resistance that endured even in the darkest moments. It honors lives cut short and asks us to choose dignity, compassion, and moral clarity in our own time.

The Holocaust is a story of unimaginable loss, yet it is also a story of courage and defiance. Survivors rebuilt families and communities out of the ashes. Their strength is a meaningful part of our strength. Yom HaShoah reminds us to resist indifference, and to carry memory in a way that strengthens Jewish identity. The goal is to choose to live with more intention.

Talk with your own family about how Jewish families rebuilt after the war. Help your children understand that the central Jewish story is not the destruction itself, but the Jewish response to it. Jewish tradition teaches that what defines us is not only what happens to us, but how we choose to respond. The defining Jewish moment of the Holocaust is the human and spiritual response that followed it.

To make this idea tangible, you might share these words from Edith Eger, a Holocaust survivor, from her essay “Choose Freedom” in [The Art and Practice of Living Wondrously](#), p. 178:

“We cannot always change our situations, but we can change the way we respond to them. Before we were parted, my mother gave me this advice: ‘No one can take from you what you’ve put in your mind.’ Even in prison, I could choose how I responded. I could choose what to say and what to do. I could choose my thoughts.”

This framing helps children grasp courage, agency, and the insistence on human dignity even in the face of evil.



Make Meaning at Home

Choose a **name and story** from Yad Vashem to read aloud as a family. Light a candle. Say their name and add: “Your life matters. I remember you today.”

YOM HAZIKARON

BEGINS THE EVENING OF APRIL 20
AND CONTINUES THROUGH APRIL 21

Yom HaZikaron honors Israelis who were killed in military service or in acts of terror. Even as we continue to carry deep sorrow in the wake of October 7, this day is also about love. Families have chosen to honor their loved ones through projects of kindness, community building, and resilience.

The day invites us to slow down and make space for those carrying unbearable loss. It asks us to stand with Israelis and to recognize that connection can happen from anywhere around the globe. Uncertainty about how to relate is normal. Presence matters more than expertise. Jewish strength includes the ability to support one another through heartbreak.



Make Meaning at Home

Create a moment of connection and purpose by writing a letter of gratitude from your family to an Israeli soldier. Sit together, talk briefly about the meaning of the day and the people being remembered, and then **write a message** to an active-duty member of the IDF. Sharing what you appreciate and what you hope for in their service turns your reflections into a tangible act of support.



YOM HA'ATZMAUT

BEGINS THE EVENING OF APRIL 21
AND CONTINUES THROUGH APRIL 22

Celebrate Israel's birthday by bringing Israel into your home and daily life. Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebrates the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948. After centuries of living without sovereignty, the Jewish people stepped back into history as authors of our own future. Yom Ha'Atzmaut is about possibility. A people who endured displacement and persecution built a home with vision and courage. The day reminds us that Jewish hope is not theoretical. It becomes real through action, imagination, and community.

You do not need a full command of the history of Israel to mark this day meaningfully. Hold on to the core idea: Jewish flourishing includes a Jewish homeland, and that homeland is still growing and evolving.

Make Meaning at Home

Share with your family one thing that makes you feel connected to Israel: a photo or memory; an Israeli you love or admire; a song or work of art or poem. Consider what you can do to support an Israeli business, or reach out to a friend or relative living in Israel and tell them you are thinking of them.

HERE ARE SOME LINKS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED!

[Support Israeli Art and Artists](#)

[Explore Israeli Literature](#)

[Listen to Israeli Music](#)



YOM YERUSHALAYIM

MAY 15

Yom Yerushalayim marks the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967. For many Jews outside Israel, this celebration may feel less familiar, yet understanding its meaning offers us an opportunity to reconnect with what Jerusalem has meant to Jews across centuries.

Jerusalem has been at the center of Jewish prayer and hope for more than two thousand years. Even if you have never been there, Jerusalem is part of the landscape of Judaism. Yom Yerushalayim offers a moment to honor that connection.

The day invites reflection rather than analysis. Think about what Jerusalem represents for you, perhaps holiness, purpose, beauty, resilience. You can honor Jerusalem without entering political debates. Honor the symbol and the spiritual center.

Make Meaning at Home

Together as a family, [watch this video](#) of Israeli first responders singing *Yerushalayim shel Zahav (Jerusalem of Gold)* and [explore the lyrics](#). Notice the words used to express longing and love for Jerusalem across generations. Share with your children that Jews have prayed for Jerusalem and dreamed of Jerusalem for thousands of years. Ask them what images or moments in the video stand out. Talk together about how hope can live in a city, and how hope can live inside a person.