

## Chesed

*Chesed* means “kindness” in Hebrew. The word can also be translated as “lovingkindness,” to convey the deep love that animates Jewish acts of kindness, done without thought of reward.

The Bible has numerous examples of *chesed*, such as Abraham and Sarah welcoming three strangers to their tent in the heat of the day; Abraham’s servant’s prayer for a wife for Isaac, answered by Rebecca who offers water to him and to his camels; and Ruth, who shows loyalty and kindness to Naomi, adopting her religion and peoplehood, after Naomi has experienced great loss. The rabbinic tradition enacted many laws to formalize our commitment to kindness, making *chesed* one of the three central pillars of Jewish life, as Shimon HaTzaddik taught: “The world rests on three things, on Torah, on service of God, and on deeds of kindness” (Pirkei Avot 1:2).

The 5780 (2019-2020) Torah Fund pin depicts a heart surrounded by three circles, one larger than the next. This symbolizes the heart of kindness, which Jews enact in ever-widening realms of generosity: from family, to community, to the larger world; from North America, to Israel, to the world; or from sisterhood, to region, to the larger world of Women’s League for Conservative Judaism. And as it is said in Psalm 89, may we build a world of kindness.



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