Lost & Found

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LOST & FOUND
**INTRODUCTION**

Lost & Found is a party game set in 12th Century Fustat (Old Cairo). The laws in the game are drawn from medieval legal systems, the first module from Maimonides’ law code (set of laws) *Mishneh Torah*. Specifically, the laws are from a section dealing with lost and found objects.

Maimonides was a renowned physician, philosopher, legal scholar, and rabbi. He learned from surrounding Muslim legal philosophers and scholars and also influenced Muslim scholars. When Maimonides wrote the Mishneh Torah from 1170-1180 CE, he was drawing from earlier law code, the Mishnah (edited circa 250CE), which was the first written code after the Hebrew Bible, and the Talmud (edited circa 650 CE). The Talmud comprises legal debates and stories commenting on the Mishnah. Maimonides was also drawing on contemporary knowledge, including medicine of the time.

You will notice that religious law of the time holds people to different, sometimes higher standards than we do today.

The illustrations of objects, settings, and architectural patterns in this game are researched to be historically accurate and can give you a feel for the time and place.
CONTENTS
The following are included in this version of the game:

- 5 Role cards and a corresponding Play Mat for each role
- Communal Responsibility deck of 10 cards
- 5 Family Responsibility decks of 5 cards each (all five decks are identical)
- Event deck of 33 cards (divided into four sets of cards by season: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)
- Lost Resource deck of 6 cards
- Starting Resource deck of 10 cards
- Resource deck of 66 cards
- Heshbon deck of 10 cards
- 5 player reference cards

OBJECTIVE
This is a cooperative game with some competitive elements. All players must work together to complete at least 6 of the 10 Communal Responsibilities by the end of the game. If unsuccessful, all players lose the game.

During the game, players must look out for each other. If any player becomes destitute (the inability to pay money or cards when required), all players lose the game.

Throughout the course of the game, players should be working toward completing at least 3 Family Responsibilities. If neither of the above loss conditions are met, then at the end of the game, any player who does not have enough Family Responsibilities complete loses the game. Any players who complete the required amount of Family Responsibilities win the game, together; in this way, the game can end with no winners, one winner, several winners, or all winners.
**SETUP**

1. Set aside the Heshbon’ deck. It is only used at Festivals and at the end of the game.

2. Shuffle and deal one of the Role cards to each player. Each Role card lists two specific Starting Resource cards that begin the game in that player’s hand; these should be taken from the Starting Resource deck. Each Role also has a unique special ability. Players take the corresponding Play Mat for their Role, at which point the Role cards can be returned to the box. If playing with fewer than five players, any unassigned Roles are also returned to the box and will not be used for the current game. Each player may also take a reference card.

3. Shuffle the Resource deck and place it in reach of all players.

4. Shuffle the six-card Lost Resources deck and place it off to the side. It is used by some Events in the game, but players will not draw from it in normal circumstances.

5. Sort the Event cards by season, and shuffle the cards within each season together. Then, stack the season piles in order (Winter, then Spring, then Summer, then Fall) with Winter on top.

6. Shuffle the Communal Responsibility deck and place it in reach of all the players. Turn the top three cards face-up; players will work together to complete these goals.

7. Hand each player a five-card Family Responsibility deck (each player should receive one of each titled card). Each player shuffles these cards into a deck in front of them, and draws one.

8. The player who has most recently lost or found something takes the first turn.

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1 Pronounced “Heshbone,” this is a Hebrew word that means “reckoning” or “accounting”; it serves both functions in this game. H = a soft “ch.”
PLAY

FLOW OF THE GAME
Starting with the first player, players take turns in clockwise order. A turn consists of drawing two cards from the Resource deck, then drawing and resolving a card from the Event deck, then either returning a lost Resource to a neighbor or addressing a Crisis, then playing cards to complete responsibilities, and finally discarding excess Resource cards if the player is holding too many. Play continues in this way until the Event deck is empty, at which point the game ends and winners are determined.

Interspersed with the events in the Event deck are special events called Festivals. When a Festival is drawn, normal play is temporarily suspended and all players enter a special Festival Phase. After this phase ends, the player who drew the Festival draws a replacement Event card and continues their turn from there.

During the game, except where noted, players’ unplayed Resource and Family Responsibility cards are kept in a closed hand. They may speak about what is in their hand if they wish (and they are not obligated to tell the truth), but cannot show cards to other players.

ON YOUR TURN
The player currently taking their turn is considered the active player. A turn consists of the following phases, performed in order:

1. **Draw Resources.** The active player draws two cards from the Resource deck and adds them to their hand. Resource cards have a listed owner. If the owner is *Any*, the card is considered legally owned by whomever is in possession of the card. If the owner is one of the player roles, it is considered to belong to that player; if a different player draws that card, they have found a card that the owner had previously lost. If the owner is a Stranger, the card is considered to have been lost by someone in the greater
community that is not represented by one of the five players.

2. **Draw an Event.** The active player then draws a card from the Event deck. Events may present choices to players which will affect their hand, responsibilities, or how their turn progresses. Read the card aloud, and resolve it according to the text on the card. If the card presents any player with a choice, that choice is made immediately. If the card requires a player to select a certain type of card from their hand and they don’t have any cards of that type, the Event is discarded without effect. If an Event would force any player to pay dinarim (money) or discard cards that they do not have, that player is considered destitute and all players immediately lose the game. (See *Special Rules for Events*, below.)

   a. Not all events directly affect the active player! Some may affect the player with the most or fewest completed Family Responsibilities, for example. In case of a tie for most or fewest of something, ties are broken in turn order, starting with the active player.

3. **Return Found Object or Contribute to one Crisis.** If the event is resolved successfully, the player may do one (but not both) of the following, or they may choose to do neither:

   a. If the active player has a Resource card in their hand that is owned by a different player’s role, they *may* return that card by giving it to the listed player. The other player may not refuse. A player may only return up to one card in this way per turn, even if they are currently holding several.

   b. If the active player has a Resource card in their hand that is owned by a different role that is not in the game (in games with fewer than five players), they *may* “return” that card by discarding it to the Resource discard pile, without penalty.
c. If any player has a Crisis Event in front of them, the active player may contribute one or more cards in their hand towards resolving the Crisis. (See Special Rules for Events, below.)

4. **Advance one Responsibility.** After returning a Resource or contributing to the resolution of a Crisis (or neither), the active player may do one (but not both) of the following, or they may choose to do neither:

   a. **Complete a Family Responsibility** by discarding Resource cards whose combined value meets or exceeds the requirements listed on the Family Responsibility card. The Family Responsibility card is then placed face-up in front of the active player to show that it is completed. The ability listed on the Family Responsibility affects that player for the rest of the game. The player then draws a new Family Responsibility from their deck, if there are any left.

      i. A Resource that is *not* owned legally (it belongs to another role or to a Stranger) can still be used to fulfill Family Responsibilities, but doing so is a transgression. When used in this way, that Resource card is *not* discarded, but instead is placed in the player’s Transgressions pile on their play mat.

   b. **Put resources towards a Communal Responsibility.** The active player may play one or more cards from their hand towards fulfilling the conditions of one of the face-up incomplete Communal Responsibility cards. The player places their played cards next to the Communal Responsibility card to show where they have been used. If the conditions of the Communal Responsibility are complete, then all cards used to complete it are discarded, and the card is placed off to the side where everyone can still see it. Any ability listed on the Communal Responsibility card is now in effect for the rest of the game. Draw a new Communal
Responsibility from the deck (if there are any left) to replace the completed one.

i. When using cards to complete either Family or Communal Responsibilities, a player may pay more than the listed value, but cannot “make change”; for example, if a card requires 10 dinarim worth of cards, this can be satisfied by playing a Jar of Honey (value: 4 dinarim), a Sheep (value: 5 dinarim), and a 2 Dinarim card. If a player overpays, the excess is lost.

ii. A Resource that is not owned legally (it belongs to another role or to a Stranger) cannot be used to fulfill Communal Responsibilities.

5. **Discard.** A player may only hold 3 Resources in hand at the end of their turn (Family Responsibility and Event cards do not count towards this limit, but face-up Resources do). If the active player has more than this, they must discard to bring their hand size down to 3. If a player discards a card they do not legally own, it is a transgression, and they place the card in their Transgressions pile on their play mat instead of the discard pile. After discarding (if necessary), it becomes the next player’s turn, in turn order.

**Festivals**

The **Festival Phase** is a special phase in which players are able to declare found objects, declare lost objects, and trade cards with each other. Each of these actions is performed in turn order, beginning with the active player, who drew the Festival card from the Events deck.

**Declare Lost and Found Objects.** Some players may be holding Resources that they are taking care of until the owner claims them; they may announce these cards at this time in an attempt to find the rightful owner. If the owner is another player, the card can be freely given. Unlike returning lost objects on a normal turn, players can return all such cards during a Festival if they wish. If the owner is a Stranger, then the owner may or may not be found.

Some players may also have lost some Resources (set aside due to effects of various Events); they should also declare those
lost in an attempt to recover them.

After all players have declared all lost and found resources, the Heshbon deck is shuffled and one card is dealt out for each resource that a player has lost or wishes to return to a Stranger, beginning with the active player and proceeding in turn order. If a Heshbon card says that the relevant resource’s owner is found (listed at the top of the Heshbon card), the resource is returned to its rightful owner: a found resource belonging to a Stranger is discarded without penalty, while a lost resource set aside under an Event card is returned to its owner’s hand (and that Event card discarded). If the Heshbon deck runs out, resolve the first ten resources, reshuffle the Heshbon deck, then proceed with the remaining ones.

Open Market. Each player in turn order may initiate any number of exchanges of Resources between themselves and other players. Players may make uneven trades or even gifts if they wish, but all trades must be mutually agreed upon (no trade can be forced). Players may only trade cards that they legally own; a card owned by a Stranger or by a different player cannot be traded. If a player trades away a card that is legally owned (such as the Potter trading away a Resource card that lists Potter as the owner), the recipient is now considered the legal owner; keep such cards face-up in front of their current owner as a reminder that they are legally owned (face-up Resources still count as cards in hand, for the purpose of discarding down to 3 cards at the end of each player’s turn). Events being held by a player that count as dinarim or an item may be traded, though they do not count as cards in hand. Family Responsibility cards can not be traded.

Draw New Responsibility Cards. Before resuming play, all players draw an additional Family Responsibility card from their respective decks, and a new Communal Responsibility card is flipped face-up from the deck as well. If any Responsibility deck is empty, then that particular card is simply not drawn. There is no bonus or penalty.

After Responsibility cards are drawn, the player who drew the
Festival event draws a new card from the Event Deck, resolves that Event normally, and then continues their turn from that point as usual.

**SPECIAL RULES FOR EVENTS**

In most cases, Event cards are self-explanatory, and the text on the card can simply be followed. However, some Event cards need special explanation; this explanation follows.

Some Events require one or more players to select a certain type of card from their hand. In the event that one or more of the required cards is not present in the hand of any relevant player, the entire Event is discarded without effect. A replacement Event is *not* drawn; the turn simply continues with the next phase.

Some Events refer to choosing a **random card** from a player’s hand. In these cases, the player separates all relevant cards in their hand (for example, if the Event says to choose a random legally owned Resource, the player would set aside any cards that are not Resources or that they do not legally own), shuffles them, and then fans them out face-down. The player to their left chooses one at random for the Event to affect.

In some cases, players will have the option of **negotiating** for recompense. If players choose this option, all involved players will have 45 seconds to come to an agreement (any player not involved may keep time). The agreement can be for any number of legally owned resources, except zero, and cannot be for future promises. If players fail to reach a mutual agreement in 45 seconds, proceed as if the player who triggered the negotiation did nothing (e.g. in the *Honey Vessel Cracks* event, a failed negotiation would mean that the potential helper chose to do nothing to help, and would take a Transgression, while the other player would lose their Honey).

When an Event refers to **transgressing the law**, this is treated as though the player breaks the law upon choosing the option listed as transgressing. To signify the breaking of the law, the player places the Event into the Transgressions pile on
their Play Mat, after receiving all other listed effects from the Event. (For Event cards that say to treat them as an animal of a certain value, the Event is kept with the player’s other owned Events, and placed in the Transgressions pile only after being used, or at the end of the game if unused.) Some Events may instruct the player to place a particular Resource card in their Transgressions pile instead of the Event card; in that case, do that instead of placing the Event card in the Transgressions pile.

When an Event refers to going beyond the law, this is treated as doing more than the Event “required” when that particular option is chosen. When choosing such an action, the player places the Event card in their Beyond The Law pile on their Play Mat after resolving the rest of the Event’s effects, instead of placing it in the Event discard pile.

Disasters are special community Events that require all players to come together to help one another immediately. When a Disaster is drawn, players may discuss openly with one another the best way to deal with it. During or after discussion, any number of players may choose to donate any number of Resource cards to the Event in any order. If the players cannot resolve the Disaster, all players lose the game.

When an Event refers to a Crisis, the card is placed face-up on the table in front of the player who drew the card, and it remains in play until it is resolved. When one or more Crises are in play, the active player may donate any number of cards toward resolving a Crisis during the third step in their turn, in lieu of returning a found resource to another player. Donated cards are placed next to the Crisis card, and are considered spent and no longer in any player’s hand. If the required donation on a Crisis is reached or exceeded, all donated cards and the Crisis are discarded from play, with no other ill effect. If, however, the Crisis is still in play at the start of the next turn of the player who originally drew it, the community has failed to deal with the Crisis. An effect happens to all players (as listed on the Crisis card), and then the Crisis and any cards donated toward resolving it are discarded.
PERFORMING TESHUVAH

Teshuvah is the act of repentance (literally, “turning”). If a player has any cards in their Transgressions pile at any point during their turn, they may attempt to right a transgression and thus get rid of it. This process is not considered part of any other turn phase (the player may perform Teshuvah, donate cards towards one or more Crises, and pay cards towards completion of a responsibility). Teshuvah requires a three-part process:

1. The player must ask for forgiveness out loud to whomever they wronged (if it was another player) or to all present (if it was a Stranger, or a player role that is not in the game if there are fewer than five players). Yes, the player must actually do this, or it doesn’t count.²

2. The player must pay restitution, using cards from their hand. They must pay cards of combined value equal to at least the cost of the card that gave them the transgression in the first place, plus 1 extra dinar for each time the player has performed Teshuvah (including this time). If they wronged another player, the cards are handed to them; if they wronged a Stranger, the cards are discarded.

   a. Example: a player uses a Jar of Honey (value of 4 dinarim) that they do not legally own to complete a Family Responsibility. Later, they wish to perform Teshuvah for this transgression. They must pay restitution of at least 5 dinarim (4 for the honey, plus 1 for the first time they perform Teshuvah).

   b. The restitution must consist of cards that the player legally owns. Two wrongs do not make a right.

3. The player must promise not to do this again. Again, yes, the player must state this out loud to whomever was wronged (or to all present if the transgression was against

² According to the actual law, one who was wronged by another may refuse to accept Teshuvah up to three times, after which it is forgiven. Here, the player who was wronged may only refuse once, for gameplay purposes.
a Stranger or a player role not in the game). This promise is not strictly binding by the rules of the game.

If Teshuvah is made to a Stranger or a player role not in the game, it is automatically successful. If made to another player, the player has the right to refuse...once. If refused, the player attempting to make things right may try again on their following turn. On the second attempt, Teshuvah is considered successful, whether the wronged party accepts the restitution or refuses (if they refuse at this point, the restitution is discarded rather than handed to them). Teshuvah may be attempted once per Transgression per turn.

After performing Teshuvah successfully, the relevant card in the player’s Transgressions pile is turned face-down (but still kept in that pile, as a reminder of how many times the player has performed Teshuvah so far).

Teshuvah cannot be performed after the third and final Festival card is drawn from the Event deck. Thus, players wishing to right past wrongs should make sure to do so before it is too late (particularly since another player may refuse, and the final Festival may be drawn in the interim while waiting to make the second Teshuvah attempt).

**END OF GAME**

As soon as the final Event card is drawn from the deck, the current turn is finished, and then the game ends. **Exception:** if the final Event is a Festival, the Festival is carried out normally. This allows players to attempt to find lost Resources and trade freely with one another before the end of the game. After the Festival, the game ends without resolving the rest of the turn.

**If at least 6 Communal Responsibility cards have not been completed:** The community is considered failed. **All players lose the game,** regardless of anything else. The additional steps listed next are not performed in this case.

**Otherwise:** The community has succeeded. Players then must check whether they, personally, have won or not. Each player,
in turn, takes the Heshbon Deck and shuffles it, then flips one card up on top of each face-up card in their Transgressions pile, then flips one Heshbon card on top of each card in their Beyond The Law pile, one at a time. If a player has more than ten total Transgression and Beyond The Law cards, they must deal Heshbon cards onto their Transgressions first, and ignore any additional Beyond The Law cards after the deck runs out.

Heshbon cards have one effect if played on a Transgression, and another effect if played on a Beyond The Law card; the effects for each are shown on the Heshbon cards, and are resolved one at a time in the order drawn (Transgressions first).

Transgression effects may require the payment of legally owned resources from the player’s hand as if they were performing Teshuvah, in some cases with an additional penalty (each of these must be handled separately, and the active player cannot “make change”), or even force the player to take one of their completed Family Responsibilities back to their hand so that it is no longer complete. Beyond The Law effects allow the player to take an incomplete Family Responsibility from their hand and put it into play, perhaps requiring partial or complete payment using legally owned resources from their hand.

After resolving all Heshbon effects, if the player has completed at least three Family Responsibilities, they are considered to have led a fulfilling life and are a winner of the game. Otherwise, the player loses, even if others are successful. The Heshbon deck is passed to the next player in sequence, who shuffles it and deals with their own Transgression and Beyond The Law piles. Repeat the process until all players’ final status has been determined.

Not all players may win in a single instance of the game; it is possible for no players, one player, several players, or all players to win. If all players win, the community is said to have thrived. This is challenging, but possible if the players work together.

STRATEGY HINTS
If the Communal Responsibilities are not complete, everyone
loses. On the other hand, if a single player puts too many of their own resources towards helping the community and not enough towards their own family responsibilities, the community will not fail but that player will not win, either. Players must find a balance between taking care of their own needs and those of the community.

Players should also make sure to help each other. If a single player realizes they are so far behind on their family responsibilities that they cannot win, they have no incentive to help out the community, and may even choose to intentionally go destitute (if the option is offered to them from certain Events) to make sure everyone else also loses! It is therefore in everyone’s best interest to make sure that everyone has a chance of winning; consider giving extra resources to those who need them during Festivals.

Is it worth it to transgress the law? If you are doing well enough on your own to not need the help, it’s probably not worth the risk. As with real life, desperation can be a corrupting influence; if it’s the difference between definitely losing the game and possibly winning, then you may need to take the chance. You can also transgress early with the intention of performing Teshuvah later on if you are in a better position... but remember to take care of things before it’s too late.

Keep in mind that each player can only complete at most one Family or Communal Responsibility each turn, and each player has few turns (only six in a five-player game). This does not leave much time. It is harder to have all the necessary resources in hand to fulfill a Family Responsibility than to simply put a small token card towards a Communal Responsibility, but if a player doesn’t spend at least one out of every two turns completing a Family Responsibility they will have a hard time winning in a five-player game. All players should feel a sense of urgency to complete as much as they can, as quickly as they can.
**MONEY IN THE DUST**

This event references the Mishneh Torah, Chapter 14, Halachot 9 and 10 of the Sefer Nezikin, in which it is explained that should one person witness a dinar fall from view of another (such as the coin falling from a hole in the person’s purse) into sand or dust, the coin becomes the property of the one who found it. This applies even if the one who dropped it claims that his or her name is carved on the coin because it can be assumed that money is spent and that it fell from another person who was not the original owner. Therefore, there is no legal obligation for the finder to return the coin to the person who dropped it.

**HONEY VESSEL CRACKS**

These events reference the Mishneh Torah, Chapter 12, Halachot 1, 5, and 6 of the Sefer Nezikin. The first case is that of a person carrying wine who passes a person whose jar of honey has cracked. The person carrying wine has no legal obligation to dump his or her wine, but may do so immediately without negotiating and only be owed the proper wage, for it is assumed that (s)he was carrying the wine to someplace for a job. Otherwise, the wine carrier may negotiate with the honey carrier for any amount of compensation; if they reach an agreement, the wine carrier is now obligated to dump out the wine and the honey carrier is obligated to pay the agreed upon compensation.

In the second case, a person carrying an empty vessel passes by a person whose jar of honey has cracked. The person with the empty vessel may negotiate with the person carrying the honey for some amount of compensation. Whatever the agreement they come to, the honey carrier is not legally obligated to pay the agreed amount because the person carrying an empty vessel will suffer no loss and (s)he is expected to fulfill his or her mitzvah (good deed).
ABANDONED ANIMALS

These events reference the Mishneh Torah, Chapter 11, Halacha 11 of the Sefer Nezikin. This law states that if someone intentionally abandons their property, there is no obligation to return the property. A person who sees the abandonment is not obligated to return the property, but is expressly forbidden by law to take the property as his or her own. If a person neglects to tie an animal down because he or she became distracted, it can be assumed that the person did not mean to abandon the animal and it should be returned.
Credits

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Solve for Lost & Found

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Scribing circa 12th century Egypt