

Torah Weekly

ד"ב

ROSH HASHANAH PARSHAT HAAZINU

26 Elul 5784-3 Tishrei 5785
29 September-5 October 2024

THURSDAY

ROSH HASHANAH DAY 1

Torah: Genesis 21:1-34

Maftir: Numbers 29:1-6

Haftorah: Samuel I 1:1-2:10

FRIDAY

ROSH HASHANAH DAY 2

Torah: Genesis 22:1-24

Maftir: Numbers 29:1-6

Haftorah: Jeremiah 31:1-19

SHABBAT

Torah: Duet. 32:1-52

Haftorah: Hosea 14:2-10; Micah 7:18-20

What Would We Do Without Rosh Hashanah?

Rosh Hashanah is more than just a holiday; it is Judgment Day. That's why the traditional greeting at this time is not "happy holiday," or even "good Yom Tov" or "Chag Sameach," but rather "Shanah Tovah" or, in Yiddish, "Ah Gut Yohr" ("good year"). The heavenly court will be deciding our destiny and determining our fate for the new year, so our wish for each other is that these days of reckoning go well, and that we each be blessed with only good things for the new year.

And this is precisely what makes our New Year observances distinctively different from those of so many others around the world. For Jews, New Year's Day is joyous but somber. No late-night partying for us. No drunken revelry as the clock strikes midnight. Actually, I've often wondered whether New Year's Eve partygoers are just having a harmless, fun night out, or if there is some kind of subconscious drowning of sorrows in drink as they mourn the passage of another year and all its unfulfilled dreams.

And I've also often wondered what we Jews would do without Rosh Hashanah. This is the season of Cheshbon Hanefesh (spiritual stocktaking), when we take inventory of our most personal, intimate moments. We reflect on the year gone by, our successes and our shortcomings. We consider and reconsider our relationships with G-d and with other people. We try to pinpoint our failings so that we may correct them for an improved year to come. We make amends with those we may have hurt in the year gone by. We put an end to the petty grudges and grievances of life, and look

forward to a better, happier, more serene and peaceful future.

But what if we didn't have Rosh Hashanah? What if there were no season dedicated to self-appraisal and assessment? Would we create it on our own? And if not, would we ever emerge from the rut we work ourselves into over a long, hard year? I imagine that we would just continue along the same tedious treadmill of life until something drastic arrived out of the blue to jolt us from our lethargy.

Without Rosh Hashanah, would we ever stop to consider whether the way we are living is the way we really want to live? Would we ever pause and become introspective enough to rethink life's game plan? More than likely, we would just keep running the rat race and, as some wise person once observed, "In the rat race, even if you win, you're still a rat!"

Rosh Hashanah is a time when we are compelled to sit up and take notice, to put the brakes on the mediocre merry-go-round and shout, "Stop the world, I want to get off!"

These Days of Awe compel us to think about life, about ourselves, about our families, relationships and our way of life. And if necessary, to do a re-think. It gives us the chance for at least an annual "compass reading" to establish our sense of direction so that, if necessary, we can alter our course and reroute ourselves. How does the voice inside our GPS put it? "Recalculating." Most of us do need to recalculate from time to time.

So, if we didn't have this once-a-year challenge and opportunity for personal introspection, what are the chances we would actually sit down and do it of our own volition? Probably very small indeed. Well, thank G-d we do have Rosh Hashanah. And the time for stocktaking is now. Or, as the legendary Jewish sage Hillel put it in Ethics of the Fathers, "If not now, when then?"

In our chaotic, often mad, world we ought to appreciate and embrace this wonderful opportunity. Honestly and truly, what would we do without Rosh Hashanah?

I wish my readers, our community - and indeed the world - a Shanah Tovah. May we all be inscribed in the Book of Life for a happy, healthy, peaceful, prosperous, safe, secure and spiritually rewarding new year.

By Yossy Goldman

On The Haftorah: Rachel's Sacrifice

The Haftarah for the second day of Rosh Hashanah is all about the redemption. It details how we will return to our ancient homeland of Israel and how wonderful it will be in the future Messianic age. It also explains the reason why we will merit redemption and ends with how much G-d loves us.

The core of its message is repentance and ultimate sacrifice. That is its connection to Rosh Hashanah.

The Haftarah begins with G-d saying that He found favor in us when we were in the desert, and He led us to tranquility in Israel. It continues to describe how we will return there, how wonderful things will be, and that we will return as a "vast assembly."

With what merit will we return? With the merit of repentance: returning to G-d through prayer and supplication. As the verse says, "They will come weeping, with supplications I will lead them." The power of our repentance will bring an end to this exile, and it is repentance that is central to the High Holidays, as the Ten days from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur, are called the 10 Days of repentance.

Then G-d says the most amazing thing: "I will turn their

Psalms for our brethren in the Holy Land

Psalm 117

1. Praise the Lord, all nations, laud Him, all peoples.
2. For His kindness has overwhelmed us, and the truth of the Lord is eternal. Hallelujah!

(Please say Chapter 20 daily)

"G-d's blessings bring wealth" - *Proverbs 10:22*. This is true in general, but especially to whoever gives of his time to help with the community's needs in matters of charity and strengthening Judaism.

Aleph Institute

Hyman & Martha Rogal Center

5804 Beacon Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

412-421-0111

Fax:412-521-5948

www.AlephNE.org
info@AlephNE.org



**ALEPH
INSTITUTE**
No One Alone,
No One Forgotten.

mourning into joy.” He doesn't say that He will end our mourning. Rather He will turn our mourning into joy. This means that the actual suffering and pain of the exile will be transformed into joy. The more the suffering in exile, the greater the joy when Moshiach comes.

The Haftarah continues: “*So says G-d, ‘a voice is heard on high, bitter weeping, (our Matriarch) Rachel is crying for her children...’*” Her cries are so powerful, that G-d gives in to her. He tells her that she doesn't have to cry anymore, “your children will return to their border.”

It is certain that our patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and our other matriarchs (Sarah, Rebecca and Leah) are crying for us as well. Why are only Rachel's cries heard? Why is she able to break through, while the others could not?

It is because of her great sacrifice. What was her sacrifice?

Many of you know the story. When Jacob and Rachel were to be married, Jacob

suspected that the unscrupulous Laban, his future father-in-law, would put his older daughter, Leah, under the veil. So, he and Rachel prepared a secret signal for her to show, so that he would know that it was really her. When Laban indeed made the switch, Rachel realized how embarrassed Leah would be if she was discovered, so she gave her the secret sign. By giving her sister the signal, she sacrificed everything. First, she gave away the man she loved. Second, had she married him that day, she would have possibly been his only wife and the mother of all the Tribes of Israel. She also gave up the ability to be with Jacob, which was not only a physical sacrifice, but a spiritual loss as well.

This is her tearful argument to G-d. This is her tearful argument to G-d. If I, a mere mortal, was not jealous of my sister and gave her the secret signal, then G-d, who doesn't have jealousy, because He is far beyond that, should not be jealous that the Jewish people served false gods. And with this cry, she

accomplishes what no one else could, that her children will return to their border. Then, as He does throughout the haftarah, G-d uses (Rachel's grandson) Ephraim as a metaphor for his nation.

G-d says, “Isn't Ephraim my beloved son? Isn't he a precious child?... I surely will have compassion on him.” This beloved verse is part of the Rosh Hashanah liturgy, said in a beautiful melodic tune, and the congregation usually joins in. In this verse G-d describes his love and affection for us, and that when He thinks of us, He is moved. G-d loves us so much, and he will have compassion and redeem us. The message here for Rosh Hashanah is that through repentance and true sacrifice we can bring Moshiach.

With all this said, we have all sacrificed enough already. May G-d show His love for us and send Moshiach right away.

Have a happy and sweet year.

By Yitzi Hurwitz

IN JEWISH HISTORY

Sunday, 26 Elul, 5784-29 September 29, 2024

Creation of Skies (3760 BCE)

Today is the second day of Creation, when G-d created the skies:

Monday, 27 Elul, 5784-30 September 30, 5784

Passing of Belzer Rebbe (1855)

Elul 27 is the Yahrtzeit of Rabbi Shalom Rokeach (1779-1855), founder of the Belz Chassidic dynasty.

Creation of Dry Land and Vegetation (3760 BCE)

Today is the third day of Creation, when G-d exposed the dry land and created vegetation.

Frankfurt Jews Expelled (1614)

On this date in 1614, the evil Vincent Fettmilch organized an attack on the Jewish quarter of Frankfurt, and the Jews were expelled from the city. Thanks to the Emperor's intervention, two years later the Jews were allowed to return to the city in honor, and Vincent and his cohorts were hanged.

Passing of R. Nathan Adler (1800)

R. Nathan Adler, a known kabbalist and mystic, headed a Talmudic academy in Frankfurt. Among his many students was the famed R. Moshe Schreiber, known as the Chatam Sofer, who viewed R. Nathan as his primary teacher and accorded him the utmost reverence.

Tuesday, 28 Elul, 5784-1 October, 2024

Creation of Celestial Bodies (3760 BCE)

Today is the fourth day of Creation, when G-d created the sun, moon, and stars.

Wednesday, 29 Elul, 5784-2 October 2024
Tzemach Tzeddek Born (1789)

The third Chabad Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn of Lubavitch (1789-1866), was born on the 29th of Elul. Orphaned from his mother at age 3, he was raised by his maternal grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, the first Rebbe of Chabad. Rabbi Menachem Mendel assumed the leadership of Chabad in 1827, upon the passing of his father-in-law and uncle, Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch. He was extremely active in communal affairs, including in Jews financial and spiritual wellbeing. Over the course of his lifetime, Rabbi Menachem Mendel penned more than 48,000 pages of Chassidic teachings and Halachic exegesis. He is known as the "Tzemach Tzeddek" ("a sprouting of righteousness") after his work of Halachic responsa by that name.

Creation of Creatures and Birds (3760 BCE)

Today is the fifth day of Creation, when G-d created the animals of the sea and the birds.

Thursday, 1 Tishrei, 5785-3 October, 2024
Adam & Eve (3760 BCE)

On Tishrei 1 - the sixth day of creation – G-d created Adam, and from him, his wife Eve.

Binding of Isaac; Sarah's Passing (1677 BCE)

Abraham's supreme test of faith - his binding of Isaac in preparation to sacrifice him as per G-d's command - occurred on the 1st of Tishrei of the year 2084 from creation (1677 BCE), and is recalled each Rosh Hashanah with the sounding of the shofar (ram's horn -

a ram was sacrificed in Isaac's stead when an angel revealed that the command to sacrifice Isaac was but a divine test); the Torah's account of the event is publicly read in the synagogue on the 2nd day of Rosh Hashanah. On the day of Isaac's binding, his mother, Sarah, passed away at age 127, and was subsequently buried in the Machpelah Cave in Hebron.

Baal Shem Tov's Vision of Moshiach (1746)

In a letter to his brother-in-law, the Baal Shem Tov (the founder of the Chassidic movement) relates: "On Rosh Hashanah of the year 5507 [from creation] I made an 'ascent of soul' in the manner known to you... I ascended level after level until I reached the chamber of Moshiach (the Messiah)... And I asked Moshiach: "When will the Master come?" And he replied: "When your teachings will be disseminated and revealed in the world, and your wellsprings will spread to the outside..."

Daf Yomi (1923)

The "Daf Yomi" daily regimen of Talmud study (in which the participant studies one folio a day to complete the entire Talmud in seven years), initiated by Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin, was launched on Rosh Hashanah of 5684 (1923).

Friday, 2 Tishrei 5785-4 October 2024

First Shabbat (3760 BCE)

2 Tishrei marks the first Shabbat, when G-d rested after creating the world in six days. To commemorate this day, we are instructed to "Remember the day of Shabbat and sanctify it" by resting from all work.