



TAL

ROSH HASHANA

5775

THE COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

TAL has experienced a fantastic year full of inspiration and exciting activities for Jewish Youth across the community. Through its dynamic and innovative network, TAL has been at the forefront of connecting, inspiring and uniting thousands. From our popular monthly Shabbat dinners attracting hundreds, to our more intimate every day lectures and activities, we have been there for you. We look forwards to seeing more of you, and together, creating a bright future.

Wishing you all a fantastic year ahead full of health and happiness - Shana Tova Umevorechet!

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil, Director TAL

A MESSAGE FROM THE

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis



In our prayers for the High Holy Days we say *Simcha le'artzecha vesasson le'irecha* - Give joy to the land and elation to the city of Jerusalem. Following a traumatic and difficult summer it is our fervent hope and prayer that the New Year ushers in peace and security for Israel and the entire region.

Aspiration for happiness is central to our Jewish psyche. We are encouraged to celebrate what we have in a key passage in the Book of Genesis, which we will begin to read on Simchat Torah.

The Talmud (*Chulin* 139a) asks a surprising question: where can Haman be found in the Torah? Surely nowhere! The answer is mystifying: he appears in the Biblical account of the Garden of Eden.

We read: "*Hamin ha'etz...*". With these words, God confronted Adam and asked whether he had eaten of the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The Hebrew *Hamin* has the identical spelling to *Haman*. On this basis the Talmud declares "This is

where Haman can be found in the Torah".

As we often find in our sources, a creative interpretation of the Hebrew language is the vehicle for an insightful teaching – in this case about inner peace and happiness. The entire Persian nation paid homage to Haman. Only one person, Mordechai, refused to bow down to him. Instead of being content with what he had, Haman fumed and obsessed about the one thing he lacked - Mordechai's submission.

The Torah provides us with a guide to all situations that confront us in life. In asking where we find a phenomenon like Haman in the Torah, the Talmud answers by identifying him with the precedent of Eden. Instead of being happy with their bountiful blessings, Adam and Eve were miserable about being forbidden the fruit of one single tree. This destructive dissatisfaction led them to lose their paradise.

A year ago, as I took up office, I called on you to 'Come with me' on a journey. During my first year in office, I have enjoyed immensely the privilege of visiting the majority of our communities in the UK. I have been deeply

impressed with what I have seen. Our congregations boast spiritual and lay leaders of the highest calibre. Many dedicated and selfless men and women give contributions of inestimable value to their synagogues through their deep and unwavering commitment. We are blessed with warm and hospitable synagogues that stage beautiful services and provide a welcoming home for wonderful people, some of whom might otherwise be forgotten.

Unlike Haman, we recognize and rejoice in our many achievements and take pride in the work of our hands.

While feeling gratified and fulfilled we should not, however, be complacent. There is far more that we can and should be doing to breath new, fresh and exciting life into our synagogues and community centres. With this in mind, I look forward to being your active partner on this journey, in our quest to build on our attainments to date in order to achieve even greater success in the years to come.

Valerie and I extend our warmest wishes to you all for a happy, joyous, healthy, peaceful and successful New Year.



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Rabbi Abraham Levy OBE PhD



Rabbi Judah Hanasi was fond of saying that he had learned much from his teachers more from his colleagues but most of all from his pupils.

Throughout my Rabbinic career, I have often taught young parents on Sunday mornings, while their children were at Cheder. They came to learn about their spiritual responsibility for the education of their children. For the Mitzvah is directed to the parents and not to the teacher.

To highlight this point, I gave the parents copies of a famous letter written by Franz Kafka to his father. Kafka was of course one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century. In his writings, he often searched for an identity; he often discussed his anxieties living as he did in an indifferent world. Some say he yearned for Divine salvation and dabbled a little in Judaism though he was ignorant of Torah learning.

His father forced him to go to Synagogue on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and he would attend some

reproached myself for not going to Synagogue enough and for not fasting. I thought I was doing a wrong not to myself but to you. I was riddled with guilt. Later as a young man, I could not understand how, with the insignificant scrap of Judaism that you yourself possessed, you could reproach me for not making an effort to cling to a similar scrap. It was a mere scrap, a joke, not even a joke." He then tells us how he went to Synagogue with his father on the High Holidays and while in Synagogue they felt bored and indifferent. He yawned and dozed through the many hours of prayer.

When I read this letter to my class, they easily identified with these feelings – it hit home. For you see we often do so much to give our children the best possible secular education and ignore the importance of a meaningful religious education. Our children then grow up and sometimes they leave us and we as parents do not understand this and we panic and we blame them. "How can you do this to us?" we tell them. "But you only gave us an insignificant scrap of Judaism," they answer. "It was a mere scrap a joke,

form of meaning- less Seder night. not even a joke - why are you surprised?"

Kafka writes, "As a child, I

Sadly, that is how we have lost much of our Jewish intelligentsia. Brilliant brains like Kafka who only drank the secular waters of life and did not drink from the fountains of Jewish learning.

This situation encouraged me to open the Naima Jewish Preparatory School over 30 years ago. This message will be read by many parents who take their responsibility to teach their children with great care and sincerity. They do so Bidhilu Urhimu.

But unfortunately, there are many other parents who simply do not carry out this Mitzvah as diligently as they should.

The most precious values you can give your children or pass on to the next generation are in character training. Children inherit our looks, our material possessions but above all they inherit our values and our standards and those of our parents and grandparents.

I pray that the New Year will reinvigorate our desire to be even more attentive to the education of our children.

May the New Year and its blessings now commence.



Best wishes for a

Shana Tovah

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Theodore Roosevelt once famously commented: "The best thing you can do is the right thing; the next best thing you can do is the wrong thing; the worst thing you can do is **nothing!**"

Change is all around us. Change is inside of us. Change is all there is. At a cellular level, we are changing every single second. On a psychological level, we are changing every single moment. Yet many of us fear change. Change makes us uneasy. It hassles us at every corner, poking at us, annoying us. We feel like change happens when we finally get used to something. We even hate change to the core at times. But change helps us grow. As the saying goes, "To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change **often.**"

Change keeps us moving forward (hopefully). Change keeps us on our toes, rather than becoming complacent. Change gets us out of our comfort zones and opens up new doors for us. Change is good. The overarching theme of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is "change:" to change from what we were before and to become new individuals. The motif behind it all is accountability. We are responsible for our actions. We do not live in a vacuum. What we do or say has an impact and a resonance in the world. Yom Kippur represents the potential for a human being to change and return: we are not eternally condemned to follow a certain habitual path; we do have the ability, if we so choose, to change our ways.

The Sages (Nedarim 39b) tell us that Teshuva (repentance), was created before the world was created. That is to say, the idea of repentance, of a person changing themselves and changing their course, is an integral part of creation.

We all know Rosh Hashanah to be the beginning of the New Year. But rather than thinking about it as the name for only two important days

out of the calendar, Rosh Hashanah is really a concept that permeates every day of our lives.

G-d renews his work of creation each and every day of the year. Rosh Hashanah is the ground for the very promise of renewal. As human beings who are under a lot of stress, day in and day out, we need to know that external pressures need not define who we are. G-d gave us enough inner strength to overcome tension in our lives by promising us that no matter how disillusioned we might become, a better day is around the corner.

The word Shanah (year) also has the meaning of Shinuy (change). Thus, Rosh Hashanah is also the beginning of change in our lives, where we look to better ourselves for the coming year. This determination to change, then, serves as a catalyst for looking for opportunities for growth in every day of our lives.



There is no renewal without change and there is no change without renewal.

Our Neshamah (soul) has at all times an inner and outer dimension. Our external environment provides us constant feedback. We judge whether information processed by our senses is for our benefit or not. But more importantly, these perceived benefits cannot stimulate growth unless they become internalized and serve as guide posts for continued expansion and renewal.

Accompanying our blessings that we say over wine during this season is the special blessing of Shehecheyanu. This blessing echoes the soul's

yearning for enlightenment. It says that we have to first appreciate how far we have come in envisioning what it means to be alive today. Then we move onto Vekiamanu, to determine how we are to take the next constructive steps to "establish" a plan for a better life. Finally, Vehigianu, we have to reach a state of acceptance within ourselves when we realize that our past can serve as a healthy catalyst for betterment in the future.

No one ever said change is easy because ...it isn't! But knowing that there is a time each year to think about the changes we want to make and to commit to making them is the first step.

To those Annual Rosh Hashanah synagogue attendees, welcome once again to your local Holy Synagogue. We would love to see you more often!

For you, change might encapsulate itself in a resolve to participate in services more often, maybe once a month – you know you will enjoy! To those frequent synagogue attendees, it's always great to see you.

Perhaps look around this year and make an extra effort to welcome the new/old guests to our community. Delve deeper into the understanding of our lives and the acts we perform.

The happiest days of our lives are the day we were born and the day we find out why!

The world is constantly changing. Technology has ensured that in order to keep pace, we need to adapt. Let's put in that extra effort this year, focus on one positive aspect and make that change.

Let's make this Rosh Hashanah the first day of the beginning of the rest of our lives.

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'A Special Letter'

The words, "Torah + Action = Life" stand out for me and perfectly capture the Israel Trip organised by the Tal Organisation. This was the message that pervaded our entire 9 day stay. The first three days were enlightened by Shurim, courtesy of the Rabbis at Or Semach. They enlightened our minds with Halachic law, the existence of god and the clash between free will and fate/destiny. Their genuine passion and enthusiasm for the Torah stayed with me and their willingness to encourage debate and discussion impressed me. Whilst, at first, our time was devoted to education; the next 5 days were filled by, "action" and the need for, "life" as we spent time enjoying the pleasures that Israel had to offer including a history of the Wall, Go-carting, a Trip to the blind museum (Dialogue in the Dark), a Segway tour, kayaking, a stay at the Ein Gedi Springs alongside many more activities. There was never a boring moment in our action-packed schedule that catered to both our intellects and the need for entertainment.

The Tal organisation stands for how Torah must be implemented in our daily lives and how action is key to success and for a healthy Jewish lifestyle. Tal respects that life is made up of both the need to live a fun life but also a life partially devoted to study of our Jewish heritage in order to better ourselves.

Yosef Abraham (TAL Participant Israel Trip 2014)



Why do we blow the shofar during the month of Elul?

After the sin of the golden calf, Moshe went up to Mount Sinai to receive the second set of Tablets on Rosh

Chodesh Elul. On that day, the Jewish people sounded the shofar to remind themselves to stray no more after idol worship. Also, the sound of the shofar strikes awe into our hearts and inspires us to return to the ways of Torah. (Mishna Berura and Aruch Hashulchan Orach Chaim 581)

Where in the written Torah text does it tell us explicitly that the first day of Tisrei is Rosh Hashanah?

Nowhere. The Torah calls it "a day of shofar blowing." (This is one of many examples showing how our observance depends on the continuous oral tradition dating back to Mount Sinai). (Bamidbar 29:1)

We eat apples dipped in honey to symbolize a sweet year. Why do we choose apples above other sweet fruits?

Isaac blessed Jacob with the words: "The fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field which Hashem has blessed..." (Bereishis 27:27). The Talmud identifies this "field" as an apple orchard. (Ta'anis 29b, Biyur Hagra)

What two blessings do we say before sounding the shofar?

"Blessed are You... who has commanded us to hear the sound of the shofar," and the shehechiyanu blessing. (Orach Chaim 581:2)

Which Book of Tanach does the beginning of the Tashlich prayer come from?

The Book of Micha (7:18-20).

What three barren women were "remembered" by Hashem on Rosh Hashanah?

Sara, Rachel and Chana. On Rosh Hashanah it was decreed that these barren women would bear children. (Tractate Rosh Hashanah 10b)

A person's yearly allowance is fixed on Rosh Hashanah, except for three types of expenses. What are they?

Expenses for Shabbos, Yom Tov, and the cost of one's children's Torah education. (Ba'er Hetaiv Orach Chaim 242:1)

We refer to the binding of Isaac in our prayers when we say: "Answer us as You answered Abraham our father on Mount Moriah..." What was Abraham's prayer on Mount Moriah?

He prayed that Mount Moriah should remain a place of prayer for all future generations (Onkelos 22:14). Also, he prayed that his sacrifice of the ram should be considered as though he had actually sacrificed Isaac. (Rashi 22:13)

What halacha applies to the shehechiyanu blessing on the second night of Rosh Hashanah which does not apply on the second night of any other holiday?

On the second night of Rosh Hashanah it is customary to wear a new garment or to have a new fruit on the table when saying the shehechiyanu blessing. Thus, the shehechiyanu blessing applies not only to the holiday, but to the new garment or new fruit as well. (This is done in order to accommodate the minority of halachic authorities who rule that no shehechiyanu blessing be said on the second night of Rosh Hashanah.) (Taz 600:2)



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Halachot of Rosh Hashana

Rabbi Dov Levy



Simanim-special foods for Rosh Hashana

The Gemara instructs us to eat certain foods (Simanim) on Rosh Hashana which have good and positive associations in their names or physical properties. This sets a good tone for the new year and awakens us to repent in the hope of Hashem bestowing upon us the blessings alluded to with these foods.

Which foods should we eat?

The Sephardi Custom is to eat the following foods: **Tapuchim** (apples dipped in honey), **Kartei** (leek), **Silka** (beet leaves or spinach), **Tamrei** (dates), **Kera** (pumpkin), **Rubiya** (black eyed beans), **Rimon** (pomegranate), **Rosh Keves** (lamb's head). Many Sephardim follow the Kabbalistic order as follows: **tamrei, rubiya, kartei, silka, kera, rimon, tapuchim, rosh keves.**

When exactly should we eat them?

You should eat them after Hamotzi.

What do we say when eating them and do we make a beracha before each one?

Since you have made Hamotzi and eaten bread, any foods that are eaten as the main part of a meal are included in the beracha on the bread. This includes all the vegetables mentioned above. Therefore you should make Borei Peri Haetz on the apple or dates (whichever you eat first), eat a small amount then say the Yehi Ratson in the machzor. Subsequently you should say each Yehi Ratson before eating each food. Remember not to make Haetz on any fruit you eat in dessert before Birkat Hamazon as you have covered it with the beracha earlier.

Is this done at night or in the day?

The general custom is only to eat Simanim at night. However the Ben Ish Hai holds they should be eaten by day too, which is the custom of many who follow his rulings.

Are there any other foods to eat?

The custom is to find a fruit to say Shehechyanu on for the second night. This food is put on the table at Kiddush time and when the head of the house says Shehechyanu after Kiddush, he has this fruit in mind. No one need say Shehechyanu on it when they eat it as they are included in the Beracha of the head of the house.

Are there any other forms of Simanim?

Yes, we don't eat pickled or sharp foods over the New Year period. We also don't eat nuts and we dip the challa in honey or sugar after dipping it in salt. In addition, the way we act is a powerful Siman. Always stay calm, pleasant and happy during this period. Have patience with your wife, husband, children, friends etc as the worst possible sign for a bad year is anger. By acting with patience, calmness and kindness we show our trust in a good, kind judgment for the coming year Amen. Tizku LeShanim Rabot Neimot VeTovot!

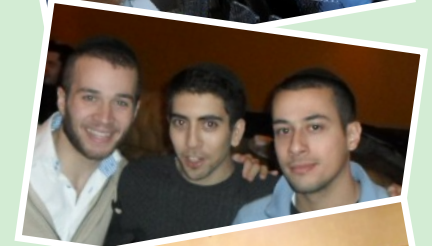
Remember to make Eruv Tavshilin on Wednesday Erev Rosh Hashana!

TAL would like to wish a hearty Mazal Tov to our wonderful growing community. Baruch Hashem Its been a fantastic year of Semachot - Ken Yirbu!

These are just some of the past years Semachot - Mazal Tov!

Births

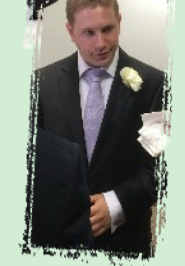
Robert & Claudia Salem on the birth of Yakov Binyamin
Moshe & Shoshi King on the birth of Rafael Yosef
Rudy & Nathalie Metta on the birth of a baby girl
Donny & Miriam Wilks on the birth of Yael
Josh & Vanessa Sinai on the birth of Jonah
Jerome & Jenifer Bokobza on the birth of Yael Rachel
Mordechai & Leah Esther Silas on the birth of Sheindel
Rochel Tzippora
Spencer & Tali Barwin on the birth of a baby boy
Jamie & Gemma Sinai on the birth of Dylan
Daniel & Shelly Sunshine on the birth of Uriel Moshe
Rabbi Eliyahu Shalom & family on the birth of twins
Jacob & Mazal Benouaich on the birth of Eitan
Yacov & Mandy Benouaich on the birth of Shaul
Mr. & Mrs. Tsurriel Korkosh on the birth of a baby boy
Joe & Shoshana Ezekiel on the birth of Shalom Ephraim
Nathaniel & Natalie Bendayan on the birth of Alice
Daniel & Natalie Feigin on the birth of Chloe
Ezra & Devorah Kada on the birth of Chaim
Tamir & Miri Haziza on the birth of Aryeh Yitzchak
Mr & Mrs Yaacov Bentata on the birth of Shlomo Ovadia
Rabbi Danny & Tamar Kada on the birth of Sara
Jonathan & Bianca Tamman on the birth of David Yosef



Wedding & Engagements

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 Ben & Raisel Freedman
 Michael & Rivkah Garson
 Raphi & Roslynn Labi
 David & Sophie Cohen
 Ben & Simona Obadia
 Moshe & Dani Moses
 Abraham Cohen & Joanna Wise
 Meir Newman & Esti Gurwicz
 Jonny & Ets Eisenberg
 Zac & Ayala Gold
 Ben & Eve Cooper
 Shimon & Irit Gabai
 Yosef Chayim & Myriam Bassous
 Elliot & Antonia Caplan
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Mazal Tov!



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The Secret Of Teshuva

Rabbi Mashiach Kelaty



Did you ever ask yourself as to why Rosh HaShanah precedes Yom Kippur? Logically, it would seem to make more sense for the day of Mercy, when we are forgiven for our sins to precede the day on which we are judged for those sins. It would suit us very well.

Rav Shimon Schwab zt'l answers this question. The first city that was conquered by Yehoshua after entering the land of Israel was Jericho. Yehoshua sent out spies to reconnoitre the land. The spies stayed in the home of Rachav the Zonah. As the Gemara implies, the simple reading of the pesukim is that Rachav was a woman of ill repute.

Rachav provided the spies with the information that they wanted to hear. "I know that Hashem has given you the Land, that your terror has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the Land have melted because of you..." The Talmud asks [Zevachim 116a], "How did Rachav know that the whole country was in mortal fear of the Jews?" The Gemara is making an inference from Rachav's statement that "neither did there remain any more spirit in any man". Rachav was testifying to the loss of spirit and initiative based on personal, professional knowledge. She had served as a harlot since she was ten years old. This was her profession throughout the forty years when the Jews were wandering in the wilderness. During this period, there was not a prince or ruler in the area who did not visit her.

At this point of time, at the age of fifty, Rachav repented and actually converted to Judaism. She confessed to G-d that during her years of sin, she made use of three devices to secretly bring customers into and out of her residence: The rope, the window, and the wall. Therefore, she now used these same three items to help the spies escape from her dwelling and from being noticed by the Canaanites, thereby saving their lives. She asked that she be forgiven for her inappropriate use of these devices by virtue of the fact that she now risked her life and used them for a laudatory

reason. This is the simple reading of the Gemara in Zevachim. Rabbi Schwab is not satisfied with this interpretation. Rav Schwab asks: what does it mean that she used the rope, the window, and the wall for people to sin? She ran a house of ill repute for forty years. Everyone must have known exactly what was going on in that house. There was no reason to have a secret entrance by way of the window and rope. After 40 years, who were these princes and kings trying to fool? What were they trying to hide by climbing up the wall and entering through the window? Everyone knew Rachav the harlot and the nature of her business. Rav Schwab interprets the Gemara differently. The Gemara is teaching us one of the secrets of Repentance. What finally inspired Rachav to repent? Rachav was inspired to repent through the realization that after 40 years in business, there were still people who were embarrassed to walk into her front door! There were still people who would be so ashamed that they would only enter by way of the rope, the wall, and the window. The fact was that after all these years, there were still people who had a modicum of dignity and embarrassment. They possessed some latent degree of sensitivity and morality that at least prevented them from committing this sin in a blatant fashion. Despite the fact that the times and the society were immersed in immorality, there were still individuals who at least had a sense of guilt, some remnant intuition of possessing a "Tzelem Elokim" [Divine image].

Teshuvah can only begin under such circumstances.

Teshuvah can only begin if I do not give up on myself. If I believe that I am totally worthless, then I cannot begin to think about repentance.

However, when I realize that somewhere deep down inside, there is still the dignity of man, there is still something holy, then I can use that feeling and begin the trek down the road to repentance. This is what Rachav meant when she referred to the rope, the window, and the wall.

The Mishnah states "Don't be wicked in your own eyes" [Avot 2:13] This is why

Rosh HaShanah must precede Yom Kippur. In order for a person to begin the process of Teshuvah, he must first realize that he is somebody of value. He must take note: I am a son of Israel. I have a King in Heaven. I am a servant of the King. Yes, I may not have been a very good servant, but at least I can say that I am His servant.

The realization that there is a King and that I am His servant, and therefore that I have self worth, is a prerequisite for the process of Repentance. If we would start the Ten Days of Repentance merely with confession, merely with a recitation of all the sins that we committed, we would overwhelm ourselves with our worthlessness and we would not be in a position to repent. On Rosh HaShanah, we never say the words "Al Chet" (upon the sins...) or "Ashamnu" (we are guilty). Leave the sins out of it, for the meanwhile. On this day, a person must think about who he is, his vast potential and his goal in life. From such a perspective, repentance may flow forward.

The Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760) suggests a beautiful Chassidic insight on this past week's portion: "If your dispersed shall be at the ends of Heaven, from there the L-rd your G-d will gather you and take you." [Devarim 30:4]

The Baal Shem Tov comments that we would have expected the pasuk [verse] to read "If your dispersed shall be at the ends of the Earth." However, the pasuk says "...at the ends of the Heaven". The Baal Shem Tov teaches the same lesson that we mentioned above: The only time that a person can be gathered back to G-d, is if "Heavenliness" is still present within the person. If a person feels that he still has a Heavenly attachment - despite the fact that he may have sullied himself with the pleasures of the earth-then from there, G-d can gather him back. Rachav was a harlot for 40 years, but she eventually married Yehoshua bin Nun, the greatest man of his generation. It all began with her contemplation of the wall, the rope, and the window - with her recognition that man, for all of his shortcomings, still possesses holiness. That must be the beginning of the path to Teshuvah. (Quoted in Vayaged Moshe)

Yom Teruah

Rabbi Aharon Bassous



One of the foundations of Rosh Hashanah is the blowing of the Shofar. This is hinted at by the essence of the day being called Yom Teruah - a day of blowing the Shofar.

The Gemara Rosh Hashanah (16a) states: "Hashem said to the Jewish people: 'Say before Me on Rosh Hashana Malkhuyot, Zikhronot and Shofarot; Malkhuyot so that you make me a King to you; Zikhronot so that your remembrance comes up before me favourably; and how? With a Shofar' ".

Hence it is through the Shofar that we are able to gain a good remembrance in front of Hashem.

This idea is also supported from the Gemara (RH 16b) that states a year that the Shofar is not blown at the beginning will end up being a tough year in the end. Tosafot there explains that we are talking about a year in which by *mistake* the Shofar was not blown on Rosh Hashanah. Nevertheless, states the Gemara, that year will not be blessed.

Thus, the Shofar blowing seems to be an essential part of the day.

What is the secret message behind this?

The Gemara in Beitsa (16a) states that a person's sustenance is fixed for them on Rosh Hashanah.

Rashi explains that all that person's income for the year to come is fixed then.

Rosh Hashanah is the day of judgement as it says Hashem 'Ori' - is my light, on Rosh Hashanah, 'Veyishi' - and my salvation, on Yom Kippur.

Rosh Hashanah is the day of judgement and Yom Kippur is there for whoever needs some help or a second chance.

An analogy can be used to explain. When a person knows they have a train to catch at 6pm, they rush to the station and try and be there a few minutes before the train leaves. If by mistake they are late by a few seconds, the train starts to depart, but they can still make it if someone inside the train gives them a hand

judgement and Yom Kippur is there for anyone who did not make it there yet. Hashem is always merciful towards us and grants us a chance to change our history.

How do we achieve success in our judgement?

R Yitschak in the Gemara (RH 16b) states any year which is impoverished (Rash) in the beginning will be rich at the end.

Rashi explains this to mean that when



Am Yisrael makes itself Rash (weak) through prayer and supplementation, then that year will be successful.

It is for this reason that the Sephardim have the custom to say the Piyut called Yedei Rashim. This beautiful Piyut stresses the importance of praying with all our heart, humbly in front of Hashem.

Similarly the Shulchan Aruch (582:4) states that some have the custom to pray bent in submission before Hashem throughout the whole prayer of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

We can now understand the meaning of 'Yom Teruah'. Rosh Hashanah is a day on which we have to pray with tears and submission in front of Hashem. The word Teruah is translated in the Targum as Yabeva - implying crying. Through listening to the Teruah, we awaken our hearts in prayer to Hashem.

If we look further, we will notice that our Sages have in fact instituted that the entire day of Rosh Hashanah be a day of prayer.

After the first prayer of the new year -Arvit- we go home to a delicious meal. But this meal seems different to

and helps them in.

Similarly, Rosh Hashanah is the main day of

meals of other Chagim. Before we start the meal, the Ben Ish Chai brings a custom to say several pesukim and to pray for sustenance, life happiness and peace. After Kidush, we have the age old custom of Simanim in which we take different foods and state a special prayer before eating them. This is in order to emphasise that this night is different to all other nights. Our meal is an extension of the prayer at the synagogue. In fact the Ben Ish Chai (Nitsavim Yr 1: Halacha 4) states that the custom in his house was to also have Simanim during the lunch meals as well. Again, this is an extension of the prayer, showing that the entire day is full of supplication in front of G-d.

In the morning, we awake early (before dawn if possible) in order not to waste any moment of this important day. Rosh Hashanah differs from any other festival in that, according to all our Sages, it is permitted to fast and pray until mid-day (Taz 597:2).

Furthermore, the Kriat Hatorah and Haftarat were instituted in order to awaken us to crying and prayer. The first day we recall the cries of Hagar, and Chana, and on the second we remember the Akeida of Yitschak and the cries of Rachel.

Before we exit the synagogue, a long Terua Gedola is sounded (Shulchan Aruch 596a). The Taz explains that this is in order to confuse the Satan and not allow him to accuse us of being relaxed and fearless as we go towards our lunch.

Rabbi Tsadka Husein instituted the custom two hundred years ago, that after lunch the community would gather in the synagogue to recite Tehilim, followed by Tashlich.

Thus, our Sages instituted different customs and prayers in order to ensure that the day of Rosh Hashanah -the day we are being judged- is a day felt by all as such. This is the intention of the Torah when it calls this special day Yom Teruah. Through the correct atmosphere and preparation in supplication, we will merit a fantastic new year .



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"For the days are scrolls. Write in them what you wish to be remembered for you".

— Rabbi Bahya Ibn Pakuda, *Hovot HaLevavot*

After hearing the sound of the shofar on Rosh HaShana, we say "Hayom harat olam", which means, "today the world was conceived". Rosh HaShana stands in our calendar as the day we celebrate and acknowledge all of the world's possibilities, dreams, and goals that G-d put into it at its conception. Rosh HaShana, therefore, assumes that the world has a purpose and a future and that all of history is the story of the universe coming into itself.

Knowing that G-d has a plan for the world allows us to see the days of our lives as elements of a continuum. To celebrate Rosh HaShana is to celebrate the idea that existence is comprised of more than just the current moment. Because G-d "announced the generations at the start" we see past and future as reali-

ties that exist and that inform our local experiences. It is as Viktor Frankl writes in Man's Search for Meaning:

'I never tire of saying that the only really transitory aspects of life are the potentialities; but as soon as they are actualised, they are rendered realities...for in the past, nothing is irretrievably lost but everything irrevocably stored'.

In seeing the world this way, every day becomes a precious piece of a whole life. As we live our days, the degree of care we put into each of them directly affects the quality of the whole. The more we love, care, feel, think, focus, and learn, the more vibrant and vivid the life that emerges. On Rosh HaShana we all take the time to pause and meditate on the path our lives are following. The sound of the shofar awakens us so that we may

Today The World Was Created

Rabbi Joseph Dweck



ask ourselves core questions about the course of our lives. Am I on a successful path? Am I living consciously? Is it time for change? Have I chosen to live my best possible life? Together with the Creator, we make these judgements on Rosh HaShana. On the anniversary of the world's conception we look at our current life superimposed against the backdrop of the life we wish to create.

Rosh HaShana, also referred to as Yom HaZikaron, the Day of Memory, brings our past, present and future before us. In our mind's eye we can see ourselves both as children and elderly people simultaneously. We understand that life is like a passing shadow, and there is no day like today to get about the business of making it the best life it can be.

Tizku leshanim rabot,

TAJ would like to give a special thanks to all the Rabbanim for their continuous support and tremendous contributions



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