



HOLIDAY READER

TISHRI 5782 | SEPTEMBER 2021



DEDICATED BY

MR. & MRS. VICTOR AND MICHELLE GINDI
MR. & MRS. DANNY AND EILEEN MAMANE
MR. & MRS. HYMIE & LIZA SHAMAH
MR. & MRS. BILLY & BARBARA DAYAN
MR. & MRS. ALFRED & PAULA SMOUHA
MR. & MRS. ALAN & BETTY ESSES

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dearest Beth Torah Family,

As we enter this most auspicious time of year, it is a great opportunity to reconnect with you, our members, after a long and hopefully enjoyable and relaxing summer.

We are excited to welcome back those that have been away for the summer as well as new members of our Beth Torah family who have been moving into our neighborhood.

We humbly offer this Holiday Reader, filled with articles and learning resources from our Rabbis, educators and lay leaders to inspire and enrich you and your family for the holiday season.

We hope you will make the most of this opportunity to share the important messages our Holy Torah has for us with your families.

As we look forward to the coming New Year, it is our fervent prayer that with G-d's help, we will be reinvigorated and strengthened to continue fortifying our rich heritage and traditions with honor and respect, in good health and happiness for all.

Wishing you and your families all the best;
Tizku LeShanim Rabbot!!!

Ely J Harary

President,
On behalf of the Executive Committee

FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ובימים שמחמתכם ובמועדיכם ובראשי חדשכם ותקעתם בהוצאת
על עלתיכם ועל זבחי שלמיכם והיו לכם לזכרון לפני אלהיכם
אני ד' אלהיכם:

On the days of your rejoicing, on your festivals and on your new-moon celebrations, you shall blow on the trumpets for your ascent-offerings and your peace sacrifices, and it shall be a remembrance before your God; I am the Lord your God.

How befitting to open up the New Year with the above passuk.

This year is a time to rejoice, a time to be thankful for what Hashem has given to us, a time to realize we are here for a very short time and we should make every moment count.

A year ago this time, the world, our world was difficult. Liveable but difficult. Now as we enter 5782, we see the light, we see encouraging things. Friends and family are back together. Life cycle events are now shared again with those we love. It's really a time for jubilation.

Beth Torah is on the cusp of major celebrations to take place this year with The Almighty's help.

Our Club 100 dream is becoming a reality right in front of our eyes. Celebrate !

Our 10 year Tiquin project is in the printing stages as I write this letter. Rejoice!

The building has the aura of great things to come this year once again. Our Rabbis and teachers will lead us to delve into the Torah like never before. Our Hazzanim will be combining their best voices with our beautiful zemirot to bring out the purest in teffilot. The Bet Midrash will be humming night after night, Sounds of our children singing pizmonim will be echoing throughout the building on a Saturday afternoons. Special guest speakers will be gracing our presence once again. Farahs will once again populate our social hall and lounge. The book club circle will be discussing the latest in literary excellence. Our seniors will once again keep the building alive during the day. And yes services committee, the kids will be running around and making noise, it's a fact of life we need to finally accept.

To make this all happen we need you back stronger than ever. Fathers, sons, mothers, daughters and just plain good friends.

The future of Beth Torah, our congregation, our home, our family has many reasons to celebrate. Join us once again.

תזכו לשנים רבות

Solly Haber

HOLIDAY MESSAGE FROM RABBI Y. A. AZANCOT

The poem *Ahot Ketana*, written by Rabbi Abraham Hazan from Gerona in the 13th century, opens the services of Rosh Hashana. “The little sister” refers to the Nation of Israel and describes her troubles and suffering in the darkness of exile. The poem also expresses hope and a plea for a good year and for redemption from exile. The poem concludes with the wishes “May the year and its blessings begin”.

However, the refrain after every verse is “*Tikhle Shanah Vekileloteha*” - may the past year and its misfortune (curses) be behind us. Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l makes the following important remark. “When greeting each other for a good year, some people wish that the coming year will be better than the past one and they paraphrase the poem, wishing *Tikhle Shanah Vekileloteha*. May the year and its curses be behind us”. Rabbi Shlomo Zalman found this to appear ungrateful toward Hashem. We should be careful, he wrote, to show appreciation and highlight the good and the blessings that we experienced during the passing year at least in the same measure that we recall the misfortunes and arguably with even more intensity in order to express our profound gratitude for those blessings. We should wish that the coming year will continue bringing blessings upon us.” Rabbi Shlomo objected to the use of the phrase “end of misfortunes” as a banner on new calendars and wishes cards.

The instinctive reaction toward the new year is to pray and wish for the end of the misfortune. *Tikhle Shanah Vekileloteha!* It is appropriate to do so, but at the same measure, the challenge is what positive outcome we can rescue from this period and what “blessings” we can recognize had hit this past year. The appreciation of the growth is itself a blessing. The main benefit of this past year is the opportunity to reflect on the priorities in life and to acknowledge the genuinely essential. This year has offered the room to learn from the tribulations. I rather safeguard a year of bright spots in the dark and wish and pray that they become the main inspiration for the New Year.

The genuine essential in life are not workers, jobs or professions but essential is the physical health and spiritual emotional strength. A great reminder from Covid-19: Body and Soul together are essential, and both were created and fused in harmony that first Rosh Hashanah of the Creation.

To understand the statement “*Tikhle Shanah Vekileloteha*” in this poem, we are perhaps required to somewhat modify our perception of time. Time is not linear - a continuous line in which events

flow sequentially. Time should not be perceived as a sequence of moment following moment, hour following hour, with the future becoming the present and very quickly becoming the past. Torah conceptualizes time mainly as cyclical. Inspired by nature itself, day follows night and returns to day, as do months, seasons and years, just as stars and planets revolve in cycles. We don’t live our lives in a linear perspective but as a repetitive cycle.

Rav Kook explains that the Torah’s cyclical perspective of time reminds us that we are continuously offered opportunity for renewal, a chance to press ‘reset’. If time were linear, the fact that it moves on infinitely leaves no place to refresh. In the cyclical approach, says Rav Kook, we revolve back with a clear perspective of the past, offering an opportunity to review it and to realign with our own continuous development. Challenging and difficult times allow us to rescue values, to weigh priorities and stimulate meaningful changes and progress.

To illustrate this thought, imagine a family moving into a new house. It’s an opportunity to go through their belongings and decide what they will take with them to the new place and what may have become irrelevant or even disturbing. They may even uncover forgotten belongings that they realize are dear and deserve prominence or a greater appreciation. We are invited to enjoy this very experience as we move to the next year within a cyclical perspective. We can review and reflect about what we want to carry with us, and what we need to be rid of.

By applying this exercise, we will likely have the opportunity to truly appreciate some of the positive experiences of the past year despite the hardship and, as Rabbi Shlomo Zalman mentioned, we should wish they continue filling our lives. At the same time, we will undoubtedly identify what we can leave behind, as they no longer are in sync with our evolution and advancement.

The root of the word *Shana* in Hebrew means “to repeat” – once again we can detect and correct anomalies as we simply return to that same point of the circle and adjust for a better present and future. We are constantly able to return and renew as we reset and refresh for the new year.

May we be able to appreciate the good of the past year and clean up the past as we face the year ahead. May this year bring personal growth, happiness, prosperity and peace upon all of us and to the entire world, Amen

ROSH HASHANA



ZIKARON

By Rabbi Daniel Kahana

The Torah describes Rosh Hashana very briefly as “שְׁבִתוֹן זְכוֹרֹן” – a resting day of remembrance, achieved through the sound of the “teru’a” (of a shofar). Rabbenu Se’adya ben Yosef Fayoumi (882 – 942) delineates no less than ten recognitions one should have when hearing the shofar. They range from a (1) recognition of God creating the world and thus manifesting Kingship, to (3) recalling the shofar sounds of the Sinai epiphany (מעמד הר סיני) and receiving the Torah, to (4) remembering the words of the prophets which are compared to the sound of the shofar. The teru’a recalls (5) the destruction of the בית המקדש since the sound of the shofar was sounded in times of war. Rav Se’adya includes (9) the sound inviting Jews to return to Israel (קיבוץ גלויות) and (10) תחיית המתים which will occur in the time of geula. It is clear to me that what Rabbenu Se’adya is expressing is that the “zikaron” (awareness) represented by the shofar is not about any, one specific recollection. “Zikaron” is a modus operandi and an approach of perceiving life. It is the ability to see all the isolated events of history as one common and clear progression with each event intimately related to one another. Each event has eternal meaning when understood in conjunction to the whole. The basic monotonous note of the shofar is the smallest unit of music. The sound of the teru’a which is a sequence of these basic notes, is the recognition of the connectivity and meaning of each. It is to see the progression of history from the creation of the world until the days of redemption and the significance of each step. The ability to read the book that God and man have together authored called history. It is the ability to hear the music.

Maimonides (1138-1204) applies this concept of “zikaron” similarly. The hint of the shofar is (Teshuva 3): “עוררו עוררו ישנים משני” – Wake up those who simply go through life forgetting truth in the emptiness of time “בְּהִבְלֵי הַזְמַן”, viewing each action in isolation and devoid of meaning; viewing time as quantitative. Understand that our actions have infinite value. Each is an essential note of the music that makes up our life, the sum of which is a melody contributing to the symphony of humanity. Therefore, continues Maimonides in the next halacha: “לפיכך; צריך כל אדם שיראה עצמו כל השנה כלה, כאילו חציו נחציו חציו; וכן כל העולם, חציו נחציו חציו...” A person must constantly live in a state of “zikaron” and always view, not only himself as “on the fence” but the entire world as half innocent & half guilty. Any one action of an individual will make all the difference.

The “zikaron” of Rabbenu Se’adaya and that of HaRambam is one. What Rabbenu Se’adya applies on the macro-global level – connecting the notes of world history, HaRambam applies on the micro-personal level – connecting the notes of the melody of my life. The Torah instructs us to live in a constant state of “zikaron” – recognizing that our actions matter. They fashion us and the world at large. The Torah charges us with the mission of living life in a constant state of awareness; of being a people who can always hear and appreciate the music.

FROM THE ARCHIVES OF RABBI ZEVULUN LIEBERMAN Z”L (1979)

Rosh Hashana combines the human elements of reflection and expectation. These two concepts are the components in the two traditional names of the Jewish New Year – “Yom Hazikaron”, a day of remembrance-reflection; Rosh Hashana”, the head of the year, a time of expectation.

Our memories and thoughts of the past, both collective and individual, bring before our eyes a panorama of Jewish tradition and piety. In our mind’s eye we perceive the past generations, and their sacred dedication to our heritage of Tora and Misvot. Their lifestyle as an unbroken pattern of service to G-d and to their fellow-man. Learning Tora was a daily occupation; aiding the poor and destitute was a constant habit of social occupation, cheerfully performed and zealously observed. Modesty, humility were virtues transferred from parents to children; and, as a priceless heirloom, were guarded and brought forth at all times.

Looking to the coming year, as individuals we have much to strive for. Modern life is abundant in its imperfections. Human weakness has broken down the great moral barriers of the past. The nation Israel is about to set forth on a most noble political experiment of peace, fraught with danger to its own security. We are indeed witnesses to momentous decisions in history. These critical days, for ourselves, our community and our nation, bring us to the realization of the importance of prayer and faith and unity during the holiday season.

Let us recall the glorious heritage which we represent in our reflections of Yom Hazikaron. Let us project the true needs of our people on this Rosh Hashana.

May the Almighty inscribe you and your loved ones for a year of health, happiness, prosperity and peace. Tizku Leshanim Rabot.

WHICH WAY DO WE GO... WHICH WAY DO WE GO?

by Rabbi Michael A. Schrem

Baruch Hashem we find ourselves together once again on Judgement Day. Hmmm, this High Holiday salutation does seem quite a bit awkward, still, after the crises that we've endured it does seem fitting to thank Hashem for keeping and bringing us together for yet another festive holiday, even if this holiday is Judgement Day. Yet, there is another, though more subtle, reason that I'll share with you at the article's end.

According to tradition, after we've completed our one hundred & twenty years on earth, we will attend our "Ultimate Judgment Day." During those worrisome proceedings every part of our lives, from beginning to end, will be replayed right before us, and we'll admit to all that we've experienced and to all that we have done or have refrained from doing over the course of our lives. As such, when our "Ultimate Judgment Day" is adjudicated, we will have no option but to whole heartedly accept the verdict.

I'm sure that during the "Ultimate Judgment Day" we will feel tremendous pain while we relive our former selves behaving in ways that, at that time, we knew to be substantially below the standards that we've identified with. Yet, not only were these actions opposite our character, we often performed them with glee.

"What were we thinking? Why didn't we stop ourselves?"

*"What? Stop ourselves? Are you kidding? - **We reveled in it!!!**"*

Drunk on our desires, we sinisterly convinced ourselves:

"Fun times are here! Let's do this right now!

We haven't a moment to lose!

We'll worry about the consequences later!

Besides this is what being human is all about!

Anyways, Hashem loves us all, and He's seen it all!

Like a wonderful parent, He'll easily forgive & forget!"

Now in heaven on Judgment Day, we'll be in a panic. We'll experience deep pains within our chests. Perhaps we'll hear our own still quite voices unabatingly whispering while quivering:

"Oh no... Oh no... Oh no... Oh no... What have I done? Oh no... Oh no... Oh no..."

As bitter tears blur our vision and warmly stream down our cheeks, we'll have reached the point in time when the consequences of our poorly thought out actions will have come to bare...and we'll have only ourselves to blame.

Still we might argue. If only someone came to shake me out of my trance.

If only someone called out to me:

"Joey... Sarah... Henry... Phyllis... etc.,

What are you doing? Stop it right now!"

Better yet, what if I had my own personal Angel sent to me once a year by Hashem to review with me all of my life's experiences and actions. This Angel could point out to me where I went wrong, and with whom and even how I needed to make amends. Not only will I'll readily know the areas which needed improving, but I'll also come to know the fields that I'm excelling in.

What if this Angel were to direct me to the correct paths specifically for me to embark on in order to help me create the best life possible, for myself, my family and friends as well as for the entire world at large?

Wouldn't I then live to greet the "Ultimate Judgment Day" with great expectations?

Unfortunately, fantasizing about "What if?" or "If Only" will not solve the problem.

Fortunately though, we do have a solution, albeit a solution that ultimately depends on our desires to self-regulate. The solution I'm referring to can be found in the "Acquiring Vigilance" section (קניין "הזהירות"), as labeled in the holy book "The Path of the Just" authored by the Ramchal - Rabbi Moshe Haim Luzzatto ZS"l (1707-1746) (ספר "מסילת ישרים" - מאת חכם משה חיים לוצאטו זצ"ל - הרמח"ל). Therein the Hacham advises that first and foremost a person needs to be well educated in the actual behaviors that are considered to be proper and good, as well as be knowledgeable in all of the actions that are inappropriate and sinful. This awareness, of "Right & Wrong," can only be acquired via the study of Torah. Through the study of Hashem's Holy Instructions, and via the adherence to the teachings of our loving Rabbis, we can begin to conduct our lives in the proper fashion.

Yet, knowing the distinctions between "Good & Evil" just simply isn't enough to replace our imaginary "What if Angel." We still need to implement, at the very least, two more systems. One being a system that will protect us from even beginning to succumb to our desires, and as such, we will not need to rely on any outside event or person to shake us free from our stupors. The other system will help us to

uncover our failings, so that we can focus on improving. It will also show us where we're excelling, which, in turn, will motivate us to continue on the righteous path.

To address these concerns, the Ramchal offers his twofold solution. One part is to be applied in real time the moment when any deed is being done, or is about to be initiated. The other part, is an introspective review of our past day, as well as the modification of, and the implementation of, improved behaviors.

As Jews we are charged to behave responsibly throughout our daily lives, this especially goes for the times when we're interacting with others. As we live in the moment, we must be cognizant about the quality of our actions before we even take them. Before we act, we must think things through. We must weigh whether or not an action is proper or not. We must continually guard ourselves from the temptations of expediency.

We then must also make room, within our daily schedules, for quality and uninterrupted alone time. This freed up space will allow for us to mull over all of our day's events and to specifically weigh all our behaviors in relation to our own understanding of Torah values. Wherever we've gone awry we must create the means for correction, either with other people, with Hashem and even within ourselves. Of course, in the areas where we've performed well, we'll be delightfully energized and so we will most probably continue to follow the proper path. In effect, we'll have become our very own "What if Angel!"

We've only touched upon the overarching basics of this issue, as a further in depth reading of the Ramchal's work will attest. Still, it would be remiss of me if I were to leave out the Hacham's warning for those who choose to solely rely upon Hashem's assistance without they themselves having applied any serious efforts, for such a strategy is doomed. Rather, we should aim to conduct our lives in alignment with the tenet: "Hashem helps those who help themselves." Thus, our wishes for a:

"What if Angel" or an "If only Angel!" are pure folly.

In addition, even though we may do our best to take full responsibility, we still need to habitually request Hashem's never-ending assistance to help manifest our successes. As we've already mentioned, the events of the last year and a half clearly denote how unforeseen events can visit upon anyone of us, if not upon the entire globe, to effectually shake and weaken our confidences and resolves.

Finally, there's always our own evil inclinations to address. Our baser selves continually strive to keep us lazy and complacent. Our lesser selves repeatedly goad us into being "disturbingly realistic." So much so, that we chronically talk ourselves out of doing what is good and straight in the eyes of Hashem and man.

"C'mon man! Who has the time to stop and think about every action that they're about to take?"

Much less, spend every night or morning going over all of our actions? Nobody does this! We're fine just the way we are, we're just like everybody else!"

Let us not forget the ominous possibility of:

"Oh no... Oh no... Oh no... Oh no... What have I done? Oh no... Oh no... Oh no..."

Though ending right here would've been a most perfect "Mic Drop" ending, I did say that I was going to share another explanation for my oddly worded introduction. In order to do so, I'd like you to imagine that we're all existing in a world where the natural human life expectancy is effectively one-hundred and twenty. Yet, since in that world "Rosh HaShanah" doesn't exist, no one seriously reflects upon the "Ultimate Judgement Day" until they're just a few months shy of reaching one-hundred and twenty. What a nightmare scenario that would be.

"Baruch Hashem!"

Year after year after year, via the "Annual Judgement Day," Hashem lovingly sends us His "Wake Up! Angel" – At the start of every new year "Rosh HaShannah" jarringly awakes from the slumber of everyday life and sharply focuses on what our lives, as servants of Hashem, are really all about.

Tizku Vi Tihyu LiShaneem Rabboth,

Ni-Emoth Vi Toboth!

Rabbi Michael A. Schrem

THIS IS THE DAY

By Dr. Albert Matalon

It was not long ago that we were collectively sitting on the floor, reciting Megillat Eichah and lamenting the tragedies and the destruction of our past, both distant and near. One particular Pasuk in Eichah caught my eye, a passage describing the rejoicing of the enemies of Israel over our destruction:

אמרו בלענו, אך זה היום שקוינהו, מצאנו ראינו.

"We have devoured her! Indeed, this is the day we hoped for; we have lived to see it (Eichah 2:16)!" A sad time indeed in our history, a time when we suffered utter shame and indescribable persecution among the nations of the world. But the terminology of the verse struck me - "This is the day..." These are the very same words that King David used to describe a moment of utter celebration, a verse from Hallel that we all sing aloud at our most festive moments:

זה היום עשה ה' נגילה ונשמחה בו.

"This is the day that Hashem created; let us rejoice and celebrate in it (Tehillim 118:24)." How paradoxical. "This is the Day." The same words being used to describe both the blackest and the brightest of days, the lowest of times and the greatest of events, the ultimate suffering and the ultimate celebration. "This is the Day" - to which day, in fact, are we referring?

It was only when I turned to the Musaf prayers of Rosh Hashana that it suddenly hit me with full force.

זה היום תחילת מעשיך, זכרון ליום ראשון.

"This is the Day, the beginning of all Your doings..." The Day of Judgment. The Day when our future will be decided. The Day that will determine whether the upcoming year will be one of celebration and success, or *Has veshalom otherwise*. "This is the Day..." Every day in the future has the potential to be a day of Hallel or Has veshalom a day of Eichah. It all depends upon what is decided, on the Day upon which all other days depend, the Day of Rosh Hashana.

This concept is not of my own innovation. Tosafot in Masechet Rosh Hashana p.33b quotes the 'Aruch, who mentions that the custom to hear 100 shofar blows is to bring to our minds the 100 cries of the mother of the evil general Sisra, who was waiting for her son to return from battle. She was gazing intently from her window for signs of the arrival of her son, since she did not know if he would return victorious with treasures and glory, or if he would not return at all. And so her tears flowed. It is this uncertainty that we are meant to feel as we hear the cries of the shofar on Rosh Hashana, the uncertainty of what the future will bring and what will be decided on this Day of Judgement.

It is a bone-chilling thought and a most frightening concept. Indeed, the language of the entire Musaf prayer emphasizes the seriousness of the moment, describing how the future of each individual as well as every nation of the world is being decided right then and there. As the pasuk states, "Is it possible to have a shofar blown in a city and the nation will not tremble? (Amos 3:6)"

Yet at the same time, Rosh Hashana is considered a happy festival, a Yom Tob, a day where we feast, rather than fast. We dress our best, drink wine and eat meat. How strange. How can one rejoice when his entire future is on the line? The Tur (O"H 581) quotes a Midrash which addresses this very paradox. The Midrash exclaims how fortunate we are as Jews, for we are familiar with the merciful behavior and the rules by which our Creator conducts his actions. And while the usual conduct of a person who is brought to trial is to disregard his appearance due to the critical deliberation at hand, yet the Jewish people instead wear their fanciest clothes, groom themselves well and eat a festive meal on Rosh Hashana, confident that Hashem will miraculously find a way to bestow upon us a good year.

What a beautiful thought! When you know that the Judge is your father, and He wants nothing more than to bestow goodness upon you, and will perform miracles if necessary in order to rule His judgment in your favor, you can indeed walk into the courtroom with confidence despite the high stakes involved.

This beautiful idea, though, just serves to underscore our confusion in approaching Rosh Hashana. What are we to feel? Uncertainty or confidence? Fear or love? How can we be so confident in our judgement, when we know that Hashem is deciding at that very moment who will live and who will die? And if our future success is indeed guaranteed, why then is Rosh Hashana a day of awe and fear? Why is the sound of the Shofar expected to make us weep and tremble?

The ultimate answer can perhaps be found in the commentary of the Hafess Hayim on Shulhan 'Aruch (Mishna Berura on O"H 584:1). He explains that the guarantee that we will be viewed meritoriously in judgement is dependent upon how seriously and with what degree of awe we have approached the Day of Judgement. It is only as a result of our fear and uncertainty as we stand in judgement before the King of the Universe, that our merits will be recalled and brought to the forefront, and we will be guaranteed a positive outcome. If we enter the courtroom trembling, we can then walk out with confidence. If we recognize that "This is the Day" that we stand before Him with our entire future on the line, and pray like our lives depend on it, we will then be assured, G-d willing, that "This is the Day that Hashem created; let us rejoice and celebrate in it."

Wishing everyone a wonderful year of success, health, happiness and celebration, together with family and friends,

Amen

MUSAF OF ROSH HASHANA

MALKHUYOT | ZIKHRONOT | SHOFAROT

The companion brochure will guide you step-by-step through the sources. Each section is summarized at the end and each contains introductions and notes

SUMMARY

Part I. Malkhuyot – Zikhronot – Shofarot

The Musaf of Rosh Hashana is the longest Musaf in our liturgy. It contains three additions to the usual Musaf. We will explore the sources, the total number of berakhot and the order it should be recited

Part II. The ten verses & the meaning of the Berakhot.

Talmudic sources are requiring that is additional section will include ten pesukim. We will explore the sources and the reasons.

The Musaf Prayer of Rosh Hashanah

Introduction:

Usually, the Musaf prayer contains seven berakhot: The three opening Berakhot of every Amidah and the three closing blessings of the Amidah, in between these two groups the berakha called “Kedushat Hayom” which describe the offering in the Temple for the specific Shabbat, Rosh Hodesh or Holiday. The Musaf of Rosh Hashanah contains nine Berakhot, the longest Musaf in the liturgy. Rosh Hashana in the Brakha of the middle (in between the two groups) we add three unique berakhot known as Malkhuyot (Kingship), Zikhronot (Remembrances) and Shofarot (Sounding of the Shofar).

1. Rosh Hashanah 32a:2-12

מתני' סדר ברכות, אומר אבות וגבורות וקדשת השם, וכולל מלכויות עמהן, ואינו תוקע. קדשת היום, ותוקע. זכרונות, ותוקע. שופרות, ותוקע. ואומר עבודה והודאה וברכת כהנים, דברי רבי יוחנן בן נורי.

אמר לו רבי עקיבא, אם אינו תוקע למלכויות, למה הוא מזכיר. אלא אומר אבות וגבורות וקדשת השם, וכולל מלכויות עם קדשת היום, ותוקע. זכרונות, ותוקע. שופרות, ותוקע. ואומר עבודה והודאה וברכת כהנים:

MISHNA: The order of the blessings of the additional prayer on Rosh HaShana is as follows: **One recites the blessing of the Patriarchs, the blessing of God's Mighty Deeds, and the blessing of the Sanctification of God's Name (Ata Kadosh)**, all of which are recited all year long. And one includes the blessing of Kingship, containing many biblical verses on that theme, with them, i.e., in the blessing of *Ata Kadosh*, **and he does not sound** the shofar after it.

Next, one adds a special blessing for **the Sanctification of the Day**, (*kedushat Hayom*) **and sounds** the shofar after it; followed by the blessing of **Remembrances**, (*Zikhronot*) which contains many biblical verses addressing that theme and **sounds** the shofar after it; then recites the **Shofarot**, which includes verses mentioning the shofar, **and sounds** the shofar. **And he then returns to the regular Amida and recites the blessing of God's Service and the blessing of Modim and the Priestly Blessing.** This is **the statement of Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri.**

Rabbi Akiva said to him: If one does not sound the shofar for the blessing of **Kingship**, why does he mention it? **Rather, the order of the blessings is as follows: One recites the blessing of the Patriarchs and that of God's Mighty Deeds and that of the Sanctification of God's Name. He subsequently includes the blessing of Kingship in the blessing of the Sanctification of the Day and sounds the shofar.** Next, the blessing of **Remembrances, and sounds** the shofar, and the blessing of **Shofarot and sounds** the shofar. **He then recites the blessing of God's Service and the blessing of Thanksgiving and the Priestly Blessing.**

גמ': אמר לו ר"ע אם אינו תוקע למלכויות למה הוא מזכיר- למה הוא מזכיר? רחמנא אמר אידכר! אלא למה עשר- לימא תשע? דהואיל ואשתני אשתני.

GEMARA: The mishna taught that **Rabbi Akiva said to him: If one does not sound** the shofar for the blessing of **Kingship**, why does he mention it? The Gemara expresses surprise at this question: **Why does he mention it? The Hashem states that one should**

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mention it. It is a mitsva to recite “Kingship”, regardless of the Shofar. **Rather**, this is what Rabbi Akiva meant. **Why** does one mention **ten** verses of Kingship, as in the other blessings? **Let him recite nine** verses or fewer. **Since** the blessing is **different** in that it is not followed by shofar blasts, **let it also be different** also with the number of verses it includes.

Note:

1. Establish what the discrepancy between Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Akiva is.
2. The Gemarah continues to seek Pesukim supporting the practice of the additional three sections: Malkhuyot – Zikhronot – Shofarot

ומנין שאומרים מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות? ר"א אומר דכתיב (ויקרא כג, כד) שבתון זכרון תרועה מקרא קדש שבתון זה קדושת היום זכרון אלו זכרונות תרועה אלו שופרות מקרא קדש קדשה בעשיית מלאכה

And from where is it derived that one recites the blessings of Kingship, Remembrances, and Shofarot? Rabbi Eliezer says: As it is written: “In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have **a solemn rest, a memorial of blasts, a sacred convocation**” (Leviticus 23:24). This verse is interpreted as follows: “**A solemn rest,**” this is referring to the berakha of the Sanctification of the Day; “**a memorial,**” this is Remembrances; “**blasts,**” this is Shofarot; “**a sacred convocation**” this means sanctify it by abstaining from performing prohibited labor.

Note: According to Rabbi Eliezer there is no reference for the Berakha of Malkhuyot.

מנין שאומרים מלכיות תניא רבי אומר (ויקרא כג, כב) אני ה' אלהיכם ובחדש השביעי זו מלכות

From where is it derived that one recites the blessing Of Kingship? It is taught in a baraita that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: One verse states: “**I am the Lord your God**” (Leviticus 23:22), which is referring to God’s Kingship over the world; and two verses later it states: “**In the seventh month**” (Rosh Hashana) (Leviticus 23:24). **This teaches that God’s Kingship must be mentioned on Rosh HaShana.**

רבי יוסי בר יהודה אומר אינו צריך הרי הוא אומר (במדבר י, י) והיו לכם לזכרון לפני אלהיכם שאין תלמוד לומר אני ה' אלהיכם ומה תלמוד לומר אני ה' אלהיכם זה בנה אב לכל מקום שנאמר בו זכרונות יהיו מלכיות עמהן

Rabbi Yosi bar Yehuda says: This is **not necessary**, as the verse states: “Also in the day of your gladness, and in your appointed seasons, and in your New Moons, you shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt-offerings, and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings; **that they may be to you for a remembrance before your God: I am the Lord your God**” (Numbers 10:10). As there is **no need for the verse to state: “I am the Lord your God,”** and therefore what is the meaning when the verse states: “**I am the Lord your God**”? This is a paradigm that in all places where verses of Remembrances are stated, verses of Kingship should be recited with them.

Note: The Gemara was able to establish that the Torah requested the practice of adding three sections: Malkhuyot – Zikhronot – Shofarot

והיכן אומרה לקדושת היום תניא רבי אומר עם המלכיות אומרה מה מצינו בכל מקום ברביעית אף כאן ברביעית רשב"ג אומר עם הזכרונות אומרה מה מצינו בכל מקום באמצע אף כאן באמצע

The Gemara returns to the issue discussed in the mishna: **And where does one recite the Sanctification of the Day? It is taught** in a baraita that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: **One recites it with the blessing of Kingship, in the fourth blessing. He explains: Just as we find in all other places that the Sanctification of the Day is mentioned in the fourth blessing of the Amida prayer, so too here, it is recited in the fourth blessing. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: One recites it together with the blessing of Remembrances, in the fifth blessing. He explains: Just as we find in all other places that the Sanctification of the Day is mentioned in the middle blessing of the Amida prayer, e.g., on Shabbat, when it is the fourth of seven blessings, so too here, it is recited in the middle blessing, which in the case of Rosh HaShana is the fifth blessing, as the Rosh HaShana Amida prayer is comprised of nine blessings**

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Note: After establishing that the additions are required, we need to establish that the additions are inserted in the prayer of Mussaf and not in other prayers.

2. Pesikta Rabbati – 40 2. 'א: מ' רבתי מ' א' 2.

אמר רבי פנחס בשם רבי יהודה בן לוי בשם רבי אלכסנדר למה אין ישראל תוקעים מן התפילה ראשונה אלא בתפילת המוספים כדי שבשעה שהם עומדים בדין יהיו מצויין מליאי מצות הרבה ויזכו בדין

Rabbi Pinhas in the Name of Rabbi Yehuda ben Levi in the name of Rabbi Alexandri said: Why Israel don't blow the Shofar at the first prayer?(shaharit) and they wait for the prayer of Musaf? The answer is to be found full of Miswot at the moment of the Judgment.

3. Rosh Hashana 34b

מ"ט אמר רבה אמר הקב"ה אמרו לפני בר"ה מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות מלכיות כדי שתמליכוני עליכם זכרונות כדי שיבא לפני זכרונכם לטובה ובמה בשופר:

The Gemara asks: **What is the reason** that all the blasts and blessings are indispensable on Rosh HaShana? **Rabba said that the Holy One, Blessed be He, said: Recite before Me on Rosh HaShana Kingship, Remembrances, and Shofarot. Kingship, so that you will crown Me as King over you; Remembrances, so that your remembrance will rise before Me for good. And with what? With the shofar.** Since these blessings constitute a single unit, one who did not recite them all has not fulfilled his obligation.

Note:

1. We established that during the prayer of Musaf of Rosh Hashanah we fulfil the Miswa of Blowing the Shofar.

2. We also learned about the three additional Berakhot—Malkhuyot - Zikhronot and Shofarot. 3. The usual Musaf have 7 berakhot, so with the new additions we should be reciting ten Berakhot! Why do we only have nine? What Berakha is skipped?

4. TALMUD Berakhot 29a

הני תשע דראש השנה כנגד מי אמר רבי יצחק דמן קרטיגנין כנגד תשעה אזכרות שאמרה חנה בתפלתה דאמר מר בראש השנה נפקדה שרה רחל וחנה

The Gemara asks further: **Corresponding to what were these nine** blessings of the **Rosh HaShana additional prayer instituted? Rabbi Yitzhak of Kartignin said: They correspond to the nine mentions of God's name that Hannah said in her prayer** (1 Samuel 2:10). *The connection between Hannah's prayer and Rosh HaShana is based on what the Master said: On Rosh HaShana, Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah were remembered and the divine decree that they would conceive their sons was issued.*

Note: In source #1 we learned that according to Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri, the Berakha of Malkhuyot should be integrate to the third Berakha, (Ata Kadosh) the one that sanctify the Name of Hashem. Rabbi Akiva, (whom the halakha follows), holds that the blessing of Malkhuyot should be incorporated in the fourth blessing, the berakha of Kedushat haYom. This way the Musaf keeps the pattern of "Tefilat Hannah" and have only nine Berakhot.

The essential theme of Rosh Hashana is the coronation of God as King over his Creation. Malkhuyot (Kingship) reflect the uniqueness of the day "Kedushat Hayom" and therefore Malkhuyot can be easily incorporated to Kedushat Hayom.

5. RABBENU ASHER רבינו אשר ראש השנה פרק ד' סימן יד

Rabbenu Asher ben Yehiel (1250 or 1259 – 1327) was an eminent rabbi and Talmudist best known as Rabbenu Asher, "our Rabbi Asher" or by the Hebrew ("literally "Head, רא"ש, ש") acronym the Rosh

וכן כתב רי"ף גיאות' ז"ל שנהגו בשתי ישיבות ובכולהו בבל שמתפללין הצבור רק שבע ברכות וש"צ יורד ואומר תשע. והביא

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תשובות הרבה לראשונים לרב עמרם ולרב נטרונאי שאמרו מעולם לא התפללו צבור בר"ה אלא שבע. ורב שרירא גאון בנו כך אמרו והזכיר עוד גאונים אחרים וכולם כך אמרו וכן העידו. אבל הוא כתב ואנו קבלנו מחכמים גדולים ובעלי הוראה ואנשי מעשה שקבלו הם מחכמים שלפניהם כגון רב שמואל הלוי שקבל ומן רב חנוך וזקנים שבדור הלכה למעשה שאין מתפללים ז' אלא ט' וכן מורין ועושין ומתניתין מסייע להו דמקשי רבנן לרבן גמליאל לדבריך למה ציבור מתפללים, והוא עונה להם לדבריכם למה שליח ציבור יורד (ואם הציבור מתפללים רק שבע מדוע תמה רבן גמליאל למה שליח ציבור יורד, הרי יורד כדי להוציאם ידי חובת שתי ברכות נוספות - קרבן נתנאל) אלמא מה שהציבור מתפללים ש"צ יורד ואומר. לרבנן צבור עיקר ולר"ג ש"צ עיקר.

The Rosh wrote: Rabbi Isaac Ibn Giat wrote that in the two main Yeshivot (Refers to the Babylonian Yeshivot of the Geonim Sura and Pumpedita) the public recite only **7 Berakhot** during Musaf and only the Shaliah Zibur recites **the nine berakhot** at the repetition of Musaf. Many responsa of Rab Amram Gaon and Rab Natrunai Gaon states that never the kahal had recite the nine **Berakhot but only seven**. (That means no Malkhuyot- Zikhronei – Shofarot).

Rab Sherira Gaon and other Geonim also testified about the Minhag that the Kahal only recites seven and the hazan nine berakhot. But we learned from great Hahamim and devoted persons that themselves got it from previous generation of hahamim like rabbi Shemuel Halevi that got the transmission from Rab Hanokh and the sages of that generation.

They all states that one recites nine Berakhot (Rabbi Giat brings support to this position) therefore the Shaliah Zibbur repeats the same nine Berakhot that the public recited.

***Rabbi Isaac ibn Giyyat** (Lucena 1038– Cordoba 1089) was a Spanish rabbi, Biblical commentator, Posek, philosopher, and poet. According to some authorities he was the teacher of Rabbi Isaac Alfasi (The Rif) according to others, his pupil.

וכתב הרמב"ן ז"ל באמת שטענותיו של הרב גדולות הן, אבל כיון שהגאונים מעידים ואומרים שמעולם לא נעשה כן בישיבה ע"כ יש לנו לקבל עדותן... ועוד שהיה מנהגם פשוט ברוב ישראל.

הרא"ש: "ולא הבנתי הדברים הללו שנאמרו למשה מסיני. דכיוון שתקנו תשע ברכות לאמרם במוסף של ראש השנה היאך יהיו הקהל חייבין לומר שבע מהן וידלגו שתיים... דברכות מעכבות זו את זו, ואם יתפללו שבע יהיו כולן לבטלה כיוון דמחסר מן הברכה ומנהג אבותינו תורה היא

Continues the Rosh (Rabenu Asher) quoting the Ramban (Nahmanides): The Rab Isaac Giat made a very good point with solid arguments, but since the Geonim are testifying and stating that the practice of nine Berakhot for the public never existed in the Main Yeshivot, we must accept their testimony .. and note that their practice was already spread in the majority of Israel communities.

The Rosh's position himself: I don't understand this (Nahmanides) as the practice is given to Moshe Rabenu in Sinai, and since Hahamim had established nine Berakhot to be recite in Musaf of Rosh Hashana how it will be possible that the public with only recite seven and skip two of them... you must note that the Berakhot are complementing each other, if you only recite seven it will end up on berakha lebatla for all the berakhot!! The Minhag of our fathers should prevail as Torah.

6. Rabbi Zerachiah HaLevi Gerondi - Baal Hamaor בעל-המאור

ואל תתמה על מה שאמרנו שנשתנו המנהגות בדורות האחרונים מדורות הראשונים... כי משורש ההלכה אין בראש השנה שבע ברכות אלא תשע הן לעולם בן בערבית בין בשחרית ובין במוסף ובין במנחה. וכמו שאמרו בברכות (כטן) הני תשע דראש השנה כנגד מי", ואף על פי שאין תוקעים אלא במוסף... אלא שמנהג הוא בידינו מאבותינו ומאבות אבותינו שאין מתפללים תשע אלא במוסף... ומנהג אבות תורה הוא

Don't be surprise because we said that the customs had changed from the first generations to the last ones "In principle" In Rosh Hashanah there are not seven Berakhot but nine. In each of the prayers, Arbit, Shaharit Musaf and Minha of the day should include nine Berakhot. As it said (Berakhot 29) **to what are corresponding these nine blessings of the Rosh HaShana additional prayer instituted? Although we blow Shofar only at Musaf... The custom handed down to us by our fathers and our fathers' fathers is that we do not have nine in our prayers except for Musaf**

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• Summary:

- The Mishnah and Gemarah established the recitation of the three additional berakhot although disagreed in the emplacement of the Berakha of Malkhuyot. Rabbi Akiba position is retained in the practical halakha and we recite Malkhuyot after Kedushat Hashem (Ata Kadosh) and Malkhuyot is incorporated in the fourth Berakha – Kedushat hayom.
- The Gemarah presented Torah sources to the practice of these additions in the prayers
- The pesikta and the Gemarah in sources 2 and 3 affirm that Musaf is the prayer hosting the additional berakhot, as it provides more merits to Israel in the Judgement time.
- The number of total Berakot during Musaf is nine, inspired by Hannah prayer that mentioned nine time the name of Hashem.
- Different ancient practice discusses if the Hazan only recites the nine Berakhot or the kahal does too in their personal Amidah of Musaf.

Part II

The Ten Verses:

Introduction:

The Berakhot of Malkhuyot Zikhronot and Shofarot, follows a specific structure. Each section includes ten verses from: Torah, Ketubim (Tehilim, as King David was chronologically before the prophets) and Nebiim (Prophets). The last pasuk is always from the Torah.

7. Rosh Hashanah 32a:2-12

מתני' אין פוחתין מעשרה מלכיות מעשרה זכרונות מעשרה שופרות ר' יוחנן בן נורי אומר אם אמר ג' מכולן יצא:

MISHNA: One does **not** recite **fewer than ten** verses in the blessing of **Kingship**, or fewer **than ten** verses in the blessing of **Remembrances**, or fewer **than ten** verses in the blessing of **Shofarot**. **Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri says: If one recited three from each of them, he has fulfilled** his obligation.

גמ' הני עשרה מלכיות כנגד מי אמר (רבי) כנגד עשרה הלולים שאמר דוד בספר תהלים הלולים טובא הוּו הנך דכתיב בהו (תהלים קנ"ג) הללוהו בתקע שופר

GEMARA: The Gemara asks: **These ten** verses of **Kingship**, to what do they correspond? **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi said:** They correspond to the ten praises that David said in the book of Psalms. The Gemara asks: **There are many** more praises than that in the book of Psalms. The Gemara answers that he means **those in which it is written by them: "Praise Him with the blast of the shofar"** (Psalms 150:3). In that chapter the phrase "Praise Him" appears ten times.

רב יוסף אמר כנגד עשרת הדברות שנאמרו לו למשה בסיני ר' יוחנן אמר כנגד עשרה מאמרות שבהן נברא העולם הי נינהו ויאמר

Rav Yosef said: The ten verses correspond to the Ten Commandments, which were said to Moses at Sinai. **Rabbi Yohanan said:** They correspond to the ten utterances through which the world was created. The Gemara asks: **Which are these** ten utterances? The Gemara explains: This is referring to the ten times that the phrase **"And He said"** appears in the story of Creation in the first two chapters of Genesis.

(ויאמר) דבראשית ט' הוּו בראשית נמי מאמר הוא דכתיב (תהלים לג, ו) בדבר ה' שמים נעשו:

The Gemara asks: Does it refer to the repetition of the phrase: **"And He said" in Genesis?** **There are** only **nine** such phrases, not ten. The Gemara answers that the phrase **"In the beginning" is also** considered an utterance, as it is written: **"By the word of the**

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Lord were the heavens made” (Psalms 33:6), which indicates that all of creation came into existence through a single utterance, after which all matter was formed into separate and distinct entities by means of the other nine utterances.

ר' יוחנן בן נורי אומר אם אמר שלש שלש שלש מכולן יצא: איבעיא להו היכי קתני שלש מן התורה שלש מן הנביאים ושלוש מן הכתובים דהוויין להו שלש ואיכא בינייהו טובא

The mishna taught that **Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri says: If one recited three from each of them, he has fulfilled** his obligation. **A dilemma was raised before the Sages: What is he teaching here?** Does Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri mean that one must recite **three verses from the Torah, three from the Prophets, and three from the Writings, which are nine** in total, **and** if so the practical difference **between** the opinions of Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri and the first *tanna* is only one verse? **Or perhaps** he means that one must recite **one verse from the Torah and one from the Prophets and one from the Writings, which are three** altogether, **and the practical difference between them is a large** number of verses, i.e., seven.

Malkhuyot:

As introduction we recite Alenu Leshabeah – (we are familiar with this text as concluding the prayer, but Malkhuloyot is its original setting) This Berakha refers to the coronation of Hashem as Sovereign of the world. We accept upon ourselves to be His unconditional subjects. We ask the Almighty to reveal His complete and undisputed control over the world. Each creature should recognize the Kingship of Hashem and soon Humanity should become unify to fulfil Hashem will and to worship Him.

Zikhronot:

This section addresses the attention and providence of Hashem over the Creation. He remembers and knows everything, nothing is hidden from Him. He remembers each individual and reward him according of his deeds. We conclude requesting from hashem that he remember the merits of our Forefathers to our benefit, we pray that He recall the Akedat Isaac. And the promises he gave to the patriarchs in favor of their descendant. We ask Hashem to be remembered in good light.

Shofarot:

In this section, we mention the Revelation and the Giving of the Torah at the Mount Sinai with loud sounds of Shofar and thunders. We recite the ten pesukim related to this event and to shofarot. we conclude with a petition to hasten the day on which the great shofar of redemption will be sounded: “Sound the great shofar for our emancipation as describe in Zacharias.

8. MISHNETORAH – Rambam Shofar 3 – 7& 8

שְׁלֹשׁ בְּרָכוֹת אֲמָצְעִיּוֹת אֵלוּ שֶׁל רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים שֶׁל יוֹבֵל שָׁהֵן מַלְכוּיּוֹת וְזִכְרוֹנוֹת וְשׁוֹפְרוֹת מְעַכְבוֹת זוֹ אֶת זוֹ. וְצָרִיף לומר בְּכָל בְּרָכָה מִהֵן עֲשָׂרָה פְּסוּקִים מֵעֵין הַבְּרָכָה. שְׁלֹשָׁה פְּסוּקִים מִן הַתּוֹרָה. וְשְׁלֹשָׁה מִסֵּפֶר תְּהִלִּים. וְשְׁלֹשָׁה מִן הַנְּבִיאִים. וְאַחַד מִן הַתּוֹרָה מִשְׁלִים בּוֹ. וְאִם הַשְּׁלִים בְּנְבִיא יֵצֵא. וְאִם אָמַר פְּסוּק אַחַד מִן הַתּוֹרָה וְאַחַד מִן הַכְּתוּבִים וְאַחַד מִן הַנְּבִיאִים יֵצֵא. וְאַפְלוּ אָמַר וּבִתְוֹרֶתָהּ ה' אֵלֵהֵינוּ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר וְאָמַר פְּסוּק שֶׁל תּוֹרָה וְהִפְסִיק שׁוּב אֵינוֹ צָרִיף כְּלוּם:

These three middle blessings of Rosh Hashanah (every year) and Yom Kippur on the Jubilee year - which are *malkhiot*, *zikhronot* and *shofarot* impede one another. And in each of these blessings, **one must say ten verses [that are] like the essence of the blessing - three verses from the Torah, three from the Book of Psalms, three from the Prophets, and one [more] from the Torah.** But if he concludes with [a verse] from a Prophet, he has fulfilled [his obligation]. And if he [only] said one verse from the Torah, one from the Writings and one from the Prophets, he has fulfilled [it]. And even if [all he] said was, “And in Your Torah, Lord, our God, it is written, stating” - and he says a verse from the Torah, and stopped - he no longer needs anything [else to fulfill the obligation].

הַצָּבוּר חֲזָבִין לְשִׁמְעַת הַתְּקִיעוֹת עַל סֵדֶר הַבְּרָכוֹת. כִּי צָד. אוֹמֵר שְׁלִים צָבוּר אֲבוֹת וּגְבוּרוֹת וְקִדְשֵׁת הַשֵּׁם וּמַלְכוּיּוֹת וְתוֹקֵעַ שְׁלֹשׁ. וְאוֹמֵר זִכְרוֹנוֹת וְתוֹקֵעַ שְׁלֹשׁ. וְאוֹמֵר שׁוֹפְרוֹת וְתוֹקֵעַ שְׁלֹשׁ. וְאוֹמֵר עֲבוּדָה וְהוֹדָיָה וּבִרְכַּת פְּהֵגִים:

7The community is obligated to hear the tekiahs according to the order of the blessings (of the silent amidah prayer). How is that? The prayer leader says [the three standard introductory blessings known as], *avot* (forefathers), *gevurot*, (strengths) and *kedushat Hashem* (sanctity of the name); *malkhiot* (kingships); and blows three blows. He then says, *zikhronot* (remembrances) and blows three. Then he says *shofarot* (shofar blows) and blows three. And he [concludes with the concluding sections known as] *avodah* (service), *hodayah*; (thanksgiving) and the blessing of the priests.

ROSH HASHANA STUDY COMPANION

The order of the Teki'ot (blowing the shofar)

Note: The Mishna listed the order of Musaf: Malkhuyot together with Kedushat Hayom (see # 1&2) then blowing the .shofar. Zikhronot then blowing Shofar & Shofarot then blowing Shofar

מנין שאומרים מלכיות זכרונות ושופרות? רבי אליעזר אומר: דכתיב, שבתון זכרון תרועה ומקרא קודש (ויקרא כ"ג) שבתון זה קדושת היום; זכרון אלו זכרונות; תרועה אלו שופרות...

And from where is it derived **that** on Rosh HaShana **one recites** the blessings of **Kingship, Remembrances, and Shofarot?** **Rabbi Eliezer says: As it is written:** "In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a solemn rest, a memorial of blasts, a sacred convocation" (Leviticus 23:24). This verse is interpreted as follows: "**A solemn rest,**" this is referring to the blessing of the Sanctification of the Day; "**a memorial,**" this is Remembrances; "**blasts,**" this is Shofarot

ומנין שאומרים מלכיות? תניא רבי אומר: אני ה' אלוהיכם, ובחדש השביעי זו מלכיות...

From where is it derived that **that one recites** the blessing of **Kingship? It is taught** in a *baraita* that **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says:** One verse "**I am the Lord your God**" (Vayikra 23:22), which is referring to God's Kingship over the world; and two verses later it states: "**In the seventh month**" (i. 23:24). This shows that God's **Kingship** must be recited on Rosh HaShana.

אין פוחתים מעשרה (פסוקי) מלכיות, מעשרה זכרונות, מעשרה שופרות

MISHNA: One does **not** recite **fewer than ten** verses in the blessing of **Kingship**, or **fewer than ten** verses in the blessing of **Remembrances**, or **fewer than ten** verses in the blessing of **Shofarot**. **Rabbi Yoḥanan ben Nuri says: If one recited three from each of them, he has fulfilled** his obligation.

...ואומרים: שלושה פסוקים מן התורה שלושה מן הנביאים שלושה מן הכתובים ומשלים בנביא, ר' יוסי אומר: אם השלים בתורה יצא

MISHNA: ...When reciting the ten verses, **one begins with** verses from the **Torah and concludes with** verses from **the Prophets**. **Rabbi Yosi says: If he concluded with** a verse from **the Torah, he has fulfilled** his obligation.

Why we say first Tehilim (Ketubim) and then the pesukim from the Nevi'im (prophets)? Because the King David lived before the era of the prophets.

9. Rav Hay Gaon רב האי גאון

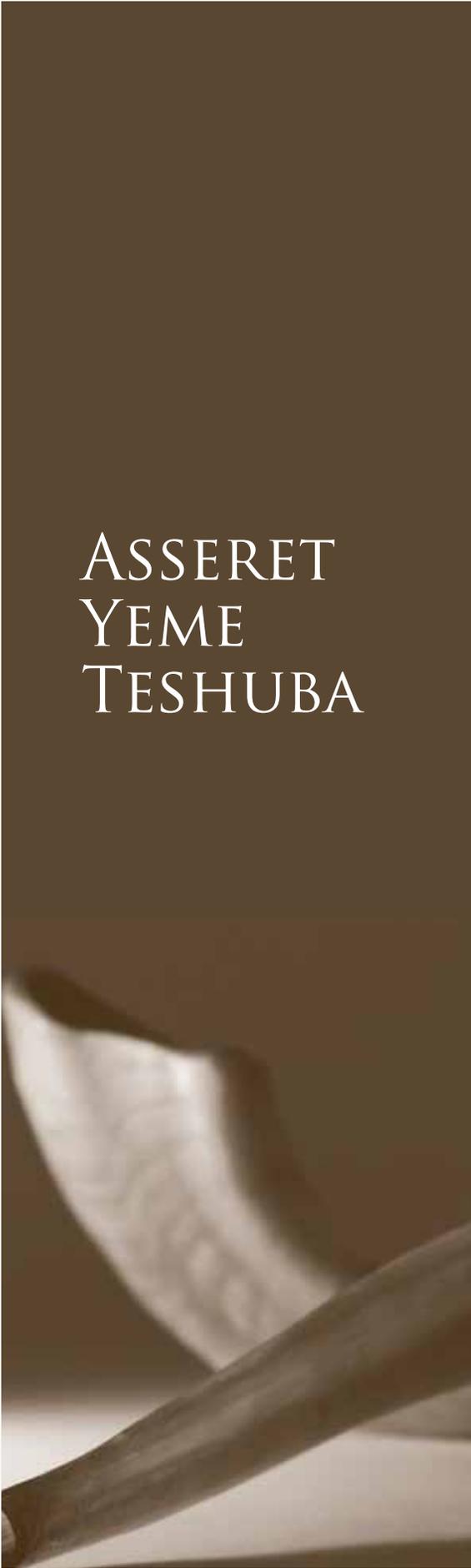
מעלה עביד להו רבנן לפסוקי דכתובים, ומסורת היא דקרינן לכתובים דברי קודש ודברי הנביאים בשליחות, לפיכך אומר "ובדברי קדשך" "וע"י עבדיך הנביאים" וכו' (מאה שערים צד כ"ו)

Hakhamim had given a superior importance to the verses of Ketubim, and it is a tradition that we call the texts of Ketubim "Holly words" Dibre Kodesh and the words of the prophets are considered "delivered by messengers". (shelihut). Therefore, we say: Your Holly words (Dibre Kodshekha) and then through your servants the prophets.

Tur Orah Hayim 591

ומ"מ נוהגין כת"ק לומר עשרה ומתחיל ואומר בשל תורה ככתוב בתורתך ואומר ג' של תורה ואה"כ ובדברי קדשך כתוב לאמר ואומר ג' של כתובים ואה"כ וע"י עבדיך הנביאים כתוב לאמר ואומר ג' של נביאים וחוזר ואומר ובתורתך כתוב לאמר ומסיים בשל תורה ואם סיים בשל נביא יצא:

The custom is to say 10 verses: 3 from Torah mentioning "as its written in your Torah", then "in your holly words its said" and mention 3 verses from Ketubim, then "through your servant the prophets you said" and mention 3 verses from prophets and conclude with a Pasuk from the Torah.



ASSERET YEME TESHUBA

SHABBAT SHUBA

By Robert Azar

שובה ישראל עד ה' אלוקיך (Hoshea' 14:2)

The persha reading on the Shabbat between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is usually Ha'azinu. Occasionally it is Vayelekh as is the case this year. Regardless of which perasha is read the Haftarah is always Hoshea' 14:2 with three pesukim from Michah, 7:18 - 17:20, added at the end.

The period between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur is known as עשרת ימי תשובה with the intermediate Shabbat called שבת שובה, an explicit acknowledgment of the opening words of the Haftarah, שובה ישראל.

Shuba, שובה, is the root of the word teshuba, תשובה. In order to accomplish meaningful and real teshuba the Torah provides us with misvot of korbanot and also with the misva of וידי, verbal confession. When giving a korban to atone for a sin a necessary and essential component of this "service" is the viduy prayer which is recited prior to sacrificing the korban that was brought to the Beit Mamikdash.

Following Hoshea's call for us to "return" the next pasuk in the Haftarah says:

קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה', אמרו אליו כל תשא עון וקח טוב
ונשלמה פרים שפתינו

"Take words with you and return to Hashem. Say to him: Forgive all guilt and accept what is good. Instead of bulls we will pay the offerings of our lips".

Hoshea' 14:3

Hoshea' emphasizes the viduy aspect of the korban by telling us to use our "words" and the "offerings of our lips" instead of a physical animal sacrifice.

HaRambam in Sefer Hamisvot lists viduy (misva 73 in his count of the 613 misvot) as an essential part of restitution process that a person must make quoting the following from perashat Naso:

דבר אל בני ישראל איש או אישה כי יעשו מכל חטאת האדם... והתודו
את חטאתם אשר עשו...

"Speak to the children of Israel [saying], a man or woman who commits from any of the sins of man [...] And they shall confess the sins that they did"

Bemidbar 5:6-7

The Haftarah concludes with the final 3 pesukim of Sefer Michah. Michah cries out to Hashem as the One who forgives our transgressions and accepts our tefilot for teshuba and casts them into the sea (this is the basis for Seder Taslich that we recite on Rosh Hashana). Michah calls on Hashem

to fulfill the oath He made to our forefathers to treat us with kindness and mercy.

The Haftarah of Shabbat Shuba serves as a reminder of the overriding significance and importance of viduy as we approach Yom Kippur and pray to Hashem to seal us in the Book of Life.

Sources:

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Daily Sefer HaMisvot (613) - Rabbi Nathan Dweck - Nevi'im Trei Asar - ArtScroll Mesorah Publications 2017

IN PURSUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

By Yaakov Douek

As we enter Elul and approach the Yamim Noraim, we begin to prepare for the new year. People start to examine their life and deeds, and try to make an accounting. This month begins our custom of daily selichot in which we recount our misdeeds. We hope to start our new year hitting the ground running, right foot first.

Let's however postulate about a real Tzaddik who has been very circumspect all year and has avoided mistakes and has been a positive influence on those he associates with. He didn't lose his temper all year. He has been exceedingly humble and never enabled his ego to take over. He has been forthcoming in Tzedaka to the extent that he was capable. All aspects of his life are guided by the Torah Law and their applications. As he goes through the selichot process, counting down the averot, he reflects that they don't apply to him. What does such an imaginary person do?

In the book Sefer Hatoda'ah, a story is told about Rav Saadia Gaon who was rolling in snow at night when one of his disciples happened upon him. The frightened man asked him why he was tormenting himself. What could he have possibly done? Rav Saadia replied that, indeed, he was not doing this to atone for anything he had done that year. Rather he explained that while travelling, he found himself in a town where a man offered to put him up for lodging. This man was not aware of who his illustrious guest was, but nevertheless, made him very comfortable and was very respectful.

When it became known in the town, who the guest actually was, the man increased his level of respect and hosted Rav Saadia in a manner that was beyond his means. On departing, the host threw himself at his guest's feet and begged his forgiveness. Puzzled, Rav Saadia responded that at no time did he feel mistreated and was very appreciative of his host. The man told him to forgive him for the period that he didn't show him the proper respect due him when he didn't know who the Rav really was.

Rav Saadia came to a realization that if such an apology was issued by a man who behaved impeccably and his only remorse was to make amends for a lack of knowledge, how much more does he owe Hashem for lack of appreciation he had at the beginning of the year, compared to an appreciation he had acquired as his understanding and love increased as the year progressed. He hadn't accorded Him the proper respect which was truly due and that is why he was rolling in the snow.

While the imagery above is mostly a mental exercise, it's beneficial for forming attitudes regarding people as well as regarding our Creator.

As we have both physical and spiritual components to our existence, that makes our presence wondrous and paradoxical. By contemplating this, we can attain greater heights of achievement, or conversely lower our existence to unbearable levels.

SELIHOT

By Rabbi Joey Mizrahi

When we think about the High Holidays, we often ask G-d for things of a personal nature. Our Rabbis, in fact, have told us that a person's livelihood is determined for the coming year on Rosh Hashannah. We spend the days listening to the Shofar, fasting, praying and asking the Al-mighty to forgive our sins and grant our requests. We pray for the people who are ill, we pray for our businesses and our children. We thank G-d for what we have and we pray for the coming year. The gates of heaven are opened and our Torah teaches us that G-d hears us whenever we call, but especially so during this period.

It has been said that studying astronomy is a humbling experience. Creation is awe inspiring. Billions of stars, planets, galaxies and an endless expanding universe. In sefer Tehilim we are told that G-d calls each star by name; he created and maintains the cosmos. How dare we then approach G-d with our trivial requests? How do we dare focus on our small, trivial needs? We are given a chance to commune with G-d, dare we squander the opportunity?

Our prayers are highlighted with a very special assortment of medieval Spanish Piyuteem. These beautiful compositions represent the greatest poets that the Jewish people have ever produced. Ibn Gabirol, Ribbi Yehudah Halevi, Ribbi Abraham Hazan, Ribbi Yehudah Ibn Abbass to name a few. Their subject matter varies widely; the Shofar, the sacrifice of Yishaq, forbearance, repentance etc. all however, contain one common denominator. It is either stated directly or alluded to in some shape, way or form. It is a subject of national scope; rather than a personal query. The poets of Spain dreamed of what the prophets foretold and could almost taste. They wrote and yearned for a situation that would not begin to materialize for many centuries.

As a nation we have suffered. The oldest of any hatreds on the planet is anti-semitism. There are numerous explanations that attempt to understand this almost innate hatred for the Jewish people. We are a nation unlike any other; hated, shunned and oppressed for centuries. It also seems that every time we try to distance ourselves from being a nation - we are all lumped together and treated as one people despite those efforts. We cannot escape! Our destiny is that no matter how observant or learned or secular or ignorant or anything else, in the end, we are members of Am Yisrael; like it or not.

We have, for many centuries, lacked something that any nation or national movement has to have to even be considered a nation a land. The Jewish people have been the world's guests since our

temple was destroyed in the first century CE. At times we have been welcomed and that welcome has always worn itself out. There have been many stories in the human drama of nations that have been displaced and wandered. None have survived as a nation for very long without their physical land. We have not only survived, we have thrived and developed.

The opening Piyout of the holidays "Ahot Ketanah" speaks about our suffering and wanderings and our stormy relationship to G-d. He ends on a positive note of national encouragement:

"Be strong and rejoice for the plunder is ended; place hope in the Rock and keep His covenant. You will ascend to Zion and He will say: Pave! Pave her paths. Let the year and its blessings begin!" On the second night of Rosh Hashannah - "Hon Tahon" has a similar message that ends in a plea for G-d to hasten the national redemption.

In "Et Shaare Rasson" Ribbi Abraham Hazzan recounts poetically the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. It is noteworthy that this is the poem that our Rabbis selected to immediately precede the shofar. What is the last thought that Ribbi Abraham Hazzan leaves us with before the shofar?

We are asking G-d to recall his covenant with the nation that has been tempest tossed and embattled. We ask Him to hear the Shofar and to, at long last, tell us that the time our national redemption has arrived.

Finally, at the end of Yom Kippour, at "Ne'ilah" we sing "E-l Norah Alillah". After a day of praying and fasting, the congregation asks the Al-mighty to send the Angels: Michael and Gabriel along with the prophet Eliyahu - to announce our national redemption.

The High Holidays are a time for repentance and introspection. The personal level is important. The overarching, national theme - of redemption and restoration, are something that our rabbis felt was the end game and goal of all our efforts. It is this request, our Rabbis felt, that is worthy of the audience we are given with G-d. It is our hope and dream as a nation. Anyone who walks the streets of Jerusalem today can see and feel the beginnings of our national awakening.

We pray for a year of answered prayers - 'Next Year in Jerusalem' above all else.

Rabbi Joseph Mizrahi

PRAYER

By Rabbi Mordechai Levy

Greetings and best wishes to you all for a healthy; happy; and prosperous upcoming year, wherever you may be during these *Yamim Noraim*-days of awe.

As is well known, this season in particular revolves around many themes, but all of them are essentially connected to the overall importance of *Tefillah*- prayer. Be it the total dominance of Hashem's Kingship we come to recognize over the days of Rosh Hashanah, to the introspection and repentance that it leads to on Yom Kippur, to the time of great joy and thanksgiving for all our material abundance on Sukkot, all of these ideals are most tangibly expressed through our connection to the unique Tefillot of each Holiday.

When praying we must always keep in mind a pivotal rule, based on the Mishna in *Masechet Berachot* (28B) that our *teffilot* must emanate from a source of supplication and not be said mindlessly by rote. This can at times become somewhat challenging, as at times we can get caught up in the liturgical aspects of the many moving prayers without properly focusing on the meaning behind them.

In his magnum opus work *Mishna Berura*(98:sk9) the *Hafetz Haim* clarifies more precisely the definition of what it means "praying by rote". Astonishingly he says that one who prays only because it is incumbent upon him to do so and in order to follow the word of G-d , even if he prays meticulously, has not properly fulfilled his obligation (although he cautions that one may not pray again if he did so). Rather while praying one must feel that he is praying in order to have his needs-be they spiritual or materialmet, and he is bringing his request to the sole power capable of helping him. Only by praying in such a manner does he truly demonstrate his belief in the efficacy of prayer.

There was a great Hassidic sage who lived at the turn of the previous century, Rav Dovid Freidman *zt"l* known world wide as the Chorktover Rebbe. A leader of a large sect of Hassidim living in Poland immediately prior to WWII, he was the rabbi of rabbis who both Hasidim and laymen from around the world turned to for his sage advice and potent blessings.

Once a certain lady presented herself before him pleading for assistance. She told a horrific tale of how her only child had recently been forcibly conscripted into the army at a tender age. She finished by pleading for the great Rabbi to try and help her free him in any way possible.

To the shock of the many observers the Rabbi sat impassively as she finished her request, and after a brief pause he asked her to state again what she wanted, as he hadn't been paying attention to what she was saying. For a second time the lady launched into her emotional story, culminating in again requesting his immediate assistance in the matter.

Upon her finishing the holy Rabbi looked up at her and told her to repeat yet again her tale of woe for he didn't quite seem to grasp what she wanted from him. His Hassidic disciples were simply stunned at the bizarre conduct of their beloved leader. How could he be so cold hearted to the pleas of this impassioned lady, so desperate for his help.

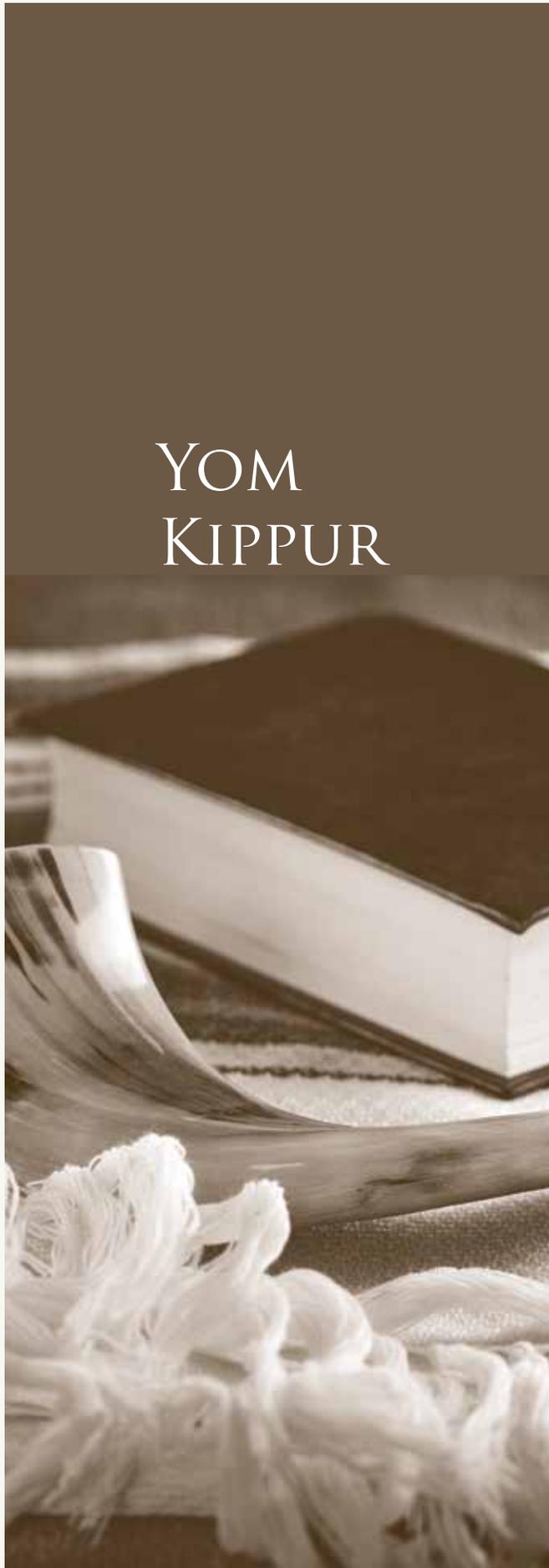
Once again she told him about the tragic occurrence which had befallen her and the need for his assistance. However this time upon the completion of her words, the venerable sage rose to his feet and began to challenge the authenticity of her story, claiming instead that she was a fraud. Panicked at her ruse being discovered, the lady quickly fled before the Rabbi and his followers could apprehend her.

It seemed that some powerful anti-semitic officials, in an attempt to squelch the Rabbi's rising influence, had attempted to ensnare him in an elaborate trap they had prepared, in order to accuse him of rebelling against the government. When questioned by his close followers as to how he was able to uncover her deception, the sage enlightened them to a most powerful lesson for the ages.

He explained how each of the three times she had told her story, the woman had repeated herself with the exact same expressions and emotions, not varying from her original recital of the tale in the slightest. This had raised the Rabbi's heightened senses, and led to him ultimately thwarting their evil plot. For one who is truly passionate about what they are asking for, can not help but add emotion and develop the request, changing it even just slightly each time repeating it.

We too must absorb this idea and never allow ourselves to fall into the pitfall of habit. For by approaching prayer idly, we lose out on our opportunity to further connect with our creator. These days especially, are earmarked as a period where we can attain unprecedented closeness to Hashem, since it is the time of year when our prayers are most readily accepted.

May we merit that all our prayers during this time of year be laden with meaning, heralding a year of great divine blessing for us, our families, and all *Am Yisrael*.



YOM KIPPUR

לך א-לי – FOR YOU MY G-D

By Rabbi Ely Matalon

For most Sephardic congregations across the world, upon entering the synagogue on the most awesome night of the year, Kal Nidre night on Yom Kippur, they are encountered by a powerful tradition that matches the excitement of that moment - with its intensity.

I'm referring to the chanting of the famous poem, or פיוט, of "Lecha Elee", authored (according to most opinions) by the great Spanish Talmid Hacham and poet Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164).

Fascinatingly, its recitation actually serves a halachic function. The Peri Hadash commentary on Shulhan Aruch (R. Hizkiah da Silva 1659-1698) explains that reading this poem fulfills the requirement according to the opinion of the Ramban (R. Moshe ben Nahman 1194-1270) of reciting the confession of sins *before* arbat, not only during minha (although not the ruling of Shulhan Aruch).

But far beyond satisfying technicalities, this masterful work is perhaps the most inspiring text of all our traditional prayers. Its solemn melody moves us as we sing it. Its emotionally-charged poetry grips us as we recite it. Above all, the simplicity of the truths which it puts forth can bring us to tears.

Lecha Elee is a most powerfully personal and direct expression of an individual Jew's most inner feelings to Hashem. For one who engages this song with sincerity and focus, it becomes an experience like no other, one which touches upon our deepest connections with our Maker.

Structurally, I believe the poem can be divided into 3 sections with several sub-sections:

1) **Our Personal G-d**

A description of our personal relationship with Hashem, in which we express our dedication and subservience to our Creator, of both our physical body as well as our faith and hope. [Lines 1-16]

2) **The Transformation in Repentance**

- A) **Pre-Confession:** Our acknowledgement of our sinful decline, our humbled feeling of shame, and our fear of judgement. [Lines 17-36]
- B) **Confession of Sins:** An alphabetized list of specific iniquities, followed by a realization of the treacherous and rebellious nature of our behavior. [Lines 37-55]
- C) **Post-Confession:** Shocked by our lowly status, we turn to Hashem as our only source of salvation, and plead with him for mercy, forgiveness and guidance. [Lines 56-80]

3) **Our Eternal Partner**

We now address the bigger picture of our existence, and pray to be accepted to an eternal dwelling place together with Hashem, in a state of great spiritual peace.

[Lines 81-90]

Let's take a short journey through this compelling text.

We begin "לך א-לי תשוקתי" - for you G-d is my hope and my longing. "לך לבי וכליותי...ידי...רגלי...עיני...צורתני ותבני-" - I enumerate the organs, limbs and make-up of my body, and understand that every aspect of my physical being, every cell of which I'm comprised is given to me by Him and perpetuated through His benevolence. "לך יחיד בלי שני...לך מלכות" - overwhelmed with gratitude, I acknowledge His Oneness and Omnipotence. "לך אוחיל...לך שברי...בך אבטח...עדי" - and because of these truths, I hope, trust and look to Him until my last breath of life.

"לך אודה ואתודה עלי חטאי ורשעתי" - but I am forthright and admit that I haven't reciprocated in kind to Hashem... I have sinned to Him. "לך אכף...לך אבכה בלב נדכה" - I feel embarrassed and cry over my foolish errors. "גדול מנשוא חטאי...ולכן" - I'm overwhelmed by the scope of my guilt and know that an exacting judgement would spell disaster. "ויצרי צוררי תמיד...יעצני" - I explain the cause of my flaws being due to my innate weakness and natural inclinations. "מאד אפחד...וארגז...ואעמוד נגדך ערום ומה" - I am terrified and tremble at the prospect of my faults being exposed before G-d and with no justification for my actions. "ויבאו ימי שלום...ומי יעמד לפניך...ואיך חשבון לך" - I know the day of reckoning will come, I have no defense, no explanation.

So with nowhere else to turn, I muster the courage to spell out and confess my wrongdoings. One by one "אשמתי...גזלתי...דבר-" - sins with money, speech, falling prey to desires, insensitivity... I lay it all out. And I reflect... "ביל-...דוטי...בזקנתי...ועזבתי רצונך...ולא בנתי לאחריתי...ולכן פני" - I've erred throughout my life, I've forsaken You. Where was my foresight? I feel ashamed.

But as I reflect, I am stirred to turn back to Hashem... "רצונך" - "אשאלה תמיד...והרב כבסני מעוונותי...ואל נא תעלם אזנך" - I have nowhere else to turn, forgive my flaws, please don't turn away from me. "ויום נפלי...סמך נא את נפילתי" - and when I stumble again, please support me.

And as I reflect further, I'm even more conscious of what You are to me... "הכי אתה מנת חלקי...ששון לבי...מנוחתי ושלותי" - You are my destiny, my joy, my peace and tranquility. I'm inspired to reach out to You... "ותש-...ותש" - "מע את תפילתי" - Bring me back and I'll return to You, guide me, accept my prayers, "מחה חטאי בדמעתי" - erase my sins with my tears.

And I start to see my life from a broader perspective, I understand that my future is bound with my Creator... "ונפשי אמרה חלקי" - "ה'...ויום לכתי לפניך רצה נא את הליכתי" - My soul knows that You are my portion, the day that I go before you please take me in. "ותשלח מלאכי החן...ושלום בואך יאמרו" - When my day comes, please have Your angels greet me with open arms. I yearn for the eternal life - "יביאוני לגן עדנך" - grant me eternal reward - "ואור גנוז לפניך יהי סתרי" - and let me dwell beneath the shadow of Your Wings - "ותחת צל כנפיך תנה נא את מחיצתי".

It's with these powerful thoughts and uplifting words that we begin our journey to repentance on this holiest day of the year.

My this timeless song embrace us and carry us to greater heights. May we always be inspired to dedicate ourselves "For You My G-d".

Rabbi Ely Matalon

G-D'S AWESOME POWER

By Jeffrey Dweck

If every holiday featured an attribute of G-d or, better, G-d's relationship to mankind, Rosh Hashanah and the days that immediately follow are often said to feature a King-Subject relationship, wherein Jews (and one day the world), contemplate their individual places and deeds, prepare to address their shortcomings and, for some, plead for their lives. It's embedded in the 3 themes of the day, Malchuyot (Kingship), Shofarot (the Shofar) and Zichronot (G-d's "memory") and we've been taught that the Awesome King is hearing our confessions and our prayers with books of fate open before Him.

It's a fearsome image, but perhaps one that is oversimplified and even misunderstood.

The final scene of our appeals, before the closing Ne'ila prayer on Yom Kippur, is the reading of the Book of Jonah on Yom Kippur afternoon. And the final curtain there is a short exchange between Jonah and G-d:

G-d saw what they (Nineveh) did, how they were turning back from their evil ways. And G-d renounced the punishment He had planned to bring upon them, and did not carry it out.

This displeased Jonah greatly, and he was grieved.

He prayed to the Lord, saying, "O Lord! Isn't this just what I said when I was still in my own country? That is why I fled beforehand to Tarshish. For I know that You are a compassionate and gracious G-d, slow to anger, abounding in kindness, renouncing punishment. Please, Lord, take my life, for I would rather die than live."

The Lord replied, "Are you that deeply grieved?"

Now Jonah had left the city and found a place east of the city. He made a booth there and sat under it in the shade, until he should see what happened to the city.

The Lord G-d provided a [gourd] plant, which grew up over Jonah, to provide shade for his head and save him from discomfort. Jonah was very happy about the plant.

But the next day at dawn G-d provided a worm, which attacked the plant so that it withered. And when the sun rose, G-d provided a sultry east wind; the sun beat down on Jonah's head, and he became faint. He begged for death, saying, "I would rather die than live."

Then G-d said to Jonah, "Are you so deeply grieved about the

plant?" "Yes," he replied, "so deeply that I want to die."

Then the Lord said: "You cared about the plant, which you did not work for and which you did not grow, which appeared overnight and perished overnight. And should not I care about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not yet know their right hand from their left, and many beasts as well!
(Jonah, 3:10 – 4:11)

We never really get an answer for what upset Jonah. We suspect that his reaction betrays an eagerness for justice and fairness and that perhaps forgiving Nineveh did not seem fair.

A better answer, according to rabbi and scholar Rabbi Shai Held, might lie in understanding what Nineveh was. Nineveh was the flourishing capital of the Assyrian Empire the largest city in the world for approximately fifty years (until 612 BCE). It was the home of the King of Assyria during the reign of King Hizkiyahu (חִזְקִיָּהוּ) and during the lifetime of the prophet Isaiah (יְשַׁעְיָהוּ).

The book of Nahum – essentially a denunciation against Nineveh – describes a terrible place, home to a terrible people who never stop killing. This is a people who will be responsible for the destruction of the First Temple and the exile and horrific slaying of G-d's people. What upsets Jonah, according to Held, is not that G-d forgives, but that G-d forgives this most egregious of peoples, the people who will wreak unspeakable horror on Israel. Just how far does G-d's mercy extend? To terrorists? To Nazis?

G-d's answer to Jonah, essentially, is what we read every day in the Ashrei psalm:

"G-d is good to all, and His mercies are on all His creatures."

It is as if G-d is telling Jonah, says Held, 'What do you want me to do?! These are my creations! I made them!'

In Isaiah 55 (6-8) we read:

Seek the Lord while He can be found,
Call to Him while He is near.
Let the wicked give up his ways,
The sinful man his plans;
Let him turn back to the Lord,
And He will pardon him;
To our God, For he freely forgives.
For My plans are not your plans, Nor are My ways your ways
—declares the Lord.

The Radak explains the last phrase: if a person sins against his fellow, he will take revenge upon him and will not forgive him. And even if he appears to forgive him, he will keep it in his heart. G-d, on the other hand, is greatly forgiving—unlike man—and when G-d forgives, nothing of the sin remains.

G-d is a forgiving King. So completely and uniquely forgiving that it defies comprehension; G-d forgives the most evil of His peoples, peoples and nations that commit atrocities. G-d punishes, yes, but G-d's capacity to forgive, unlike G-d's anger (which is only sporadic and situational), is part and parcel of what it means to be G-d.

This is G-d's power. After the sin of the spies in Bemidbar, Moshe uses G-d's 13 attributes, converted here to a prayer, in his entreaty:

The Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people provoke Me? How much longer will they not believe in Me after all the signs I have performed in their midst? I will strike them with a plague and annihilate them; then I will make you into a nation, greater and stronger than they."

Moses said to the Lord, "But the Egyptians will hear that You have brought this nation out from its midst with great power. They will say about the inhabitants of this land, who have heard that You, O Lord, are in the midst of this people; that You, the Lord, appear to them eye to eye and that Your cloud rests over them. And You go before them with a pillar of cloud by day and with a pillar of fire by night, and if You kill this nation like one man, the nations who have heard of Your reputation will say as follows:

'Since the Lord lacked the ability to bring this nation to the Land which He swore to them, He slaughtered them in the desert.'

Now, please, let the strength of the Lord be increased, as You spoke, saying.

'The Lord is slow to anger and abundantly kind, forgiving iniquity and transgression, Who cleanses [some] and does not cleanse [others], Who visits the iniquities of parents on children, even to the third and fourth generations.'

Please forgive the iniquity of this nation in accordance with your abounding kindness, as You have borne this people from Egypt until now."

And the Lord said, "I have forgiven them in accordance with your word.

(Bemidbar 14, 11-20)

Moshe reminds G-d that G-d's unique might is in G-d's capacity to forgive. More than His miracles, more than His plagues and more than His capacity to wage and win war, G-d's unique, beyond-human power is the capacity to truly forgive.

As we approach and engage Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Asseret this month of Tishri and occupy ourselves and our families with prayer and introspection and then with festivals and with each other, we can take at least two thoughts along with us. First, G-d is a loving G-d; a G-d that cannot help but to show mercy on all His creations, presumably in the hope (but not on the condition) that His creations can live up to G-d's expectations, better themselves and better their world. Second, while we recognize that humans simply don't have the capacity to forgive and forget quite like G-d may, we can aspire to imitate these attributes. Seeing mercy and compassion as an act of strength, seeing the dignity and superhuman quality in being able to completely forgive, perhaps we can inspire ourselves to be holy in yet one more way.

A DAY OF REPENTANCE, ATONEMENT AND PRAYER

By Rabbi Emanuel Kahen

Prayer. One of the most powerful tools, if not *the* most powerful tool we possess. A resource, that if tapped into properly can help us achieve practically anything we wish to achieve.

Yet, חז"ל tell us regarding prayer

“דברים העומדים ברומו של עולם ובני אדם מזלזלים בהם”

It remains a hidden gem. Underestimated.

How do we unlock the potential of prayer?

First, we must understand the *purpose* of prayer. At a first glance we pray for what we need and want - and hope that we get answered.

But why the same text three times a day, over and over again?

I asked for it, was I answered?

If yes, why am I praying again?

The מביט explains that the fundamental purpose of prayer is

“להורות שאין בעולם למי שראוי להתפלל אלא לא-ל יתברך”

For a Jew to realize that there is no source of help in this world other than Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

“שהוא חסר מכל וכל בזה העולם ואין מי שימלא חסרונו אלא הוא”

That we are lacking everything in this world, and there is no one that can give us what we are lacking other than Hashem .

In other words, the realization that all that success, blessing, etc. that has come our way, albeit our own input, could not have come to fruition if it wasn't for Hashem's help.

“שהקדוש ברוך הוא רוצה בהכרה זו”

And since Hashem wants us to come to this realization, and achieve this level of bonding with Hashem, “לכן הוא עונה לנו”

He therefore answers our prayers.

The *objective* of prayer is not just to get answered, it serves a *greater purpose* - to come to the realization that we depend totally on Hashem for every aspect of our life.

To understand that only Hashem can help us.

The Kohen Gadol Entered the Kodesh Hakodashim only one day a year - on Yom Kippur. Upon exiting, he would pray a short prayer in the Heichal. Included in that prayer was a unique request.

“ואל תכנס לפניך תפילות עוברי דרכים לענין הגשם בלבד בעת שהעולם צריך לו”

“And let it not enter before you the prayer of the wayfarers (who pray that it not rain while they are traveling on the road) only with regard to the rain when the rest of the world needs it”.

What was so special about the wayfarers' prayer that it was necessary for the Kohen Gadol to pray on Yom Kippur in the Heichal in order to negate it ?

The Alter from Kelm explains, when a man is stranded on the road in the rain, he knows there is no one that can help him other than Hashem. Such a prayer has enormous power, and for that the Kohen Gadol makes a special request.

The Mishna (Taanit 26b) writes

“אמר רבן שמעון בן גמליאל, לא היו ימים טובים כחמשה עשר באב וכיום הכיפורים”

“Raban Shimon Ben Gamliel said,

Israel had no days as festive as the fifteenth of Ab and Yom Kippur.”

Asks the Gemara,

It's understood that Yom Kippur is a joyous day, for it is a day of forgiveness and pardon. But what makes the 15 day of Ab special?

“רב דימי בר יוסף אמר רב נחמן יום שכלו בו מתי מדבר”

“Rav Dimi Bar Yosef said in the name of Rav Nachman: It was the day on which those destined to die in the desert ceased to die “.

Yom Kippur and Tu B'ab are joyous days In the Jewish Calendar. Granted.

Is there any correlation between Yom Kippur and the 15th of Ab?

Let's Take a hands on look into what actually transpired in the Midbar.

As we know, as a punishment for the sin of the spies, it was decreed that the Jews wander 40 years in the desert. Additionally, it was decreed that the 600,000 men who came out of Missrayim would perish in the Midbar over the course of the 40 years.

The Rashbam (Baba Batra 121a) quotes the Midrash Eicha.

“R Levy said: Every year ערב תשעה באב, an announcement was made for all to dig graves. Tisha B'ab night they would go to sleep in those graves. The following morning, another announcement was made let the living rise (separate) from among the dead.

Every year, 15,000 men perished on that night of Tisha B'ab. This process went on for 40 years.

Imagine the thought of sleeping in the graves they had dug out

themselves, knowing that 15,000 would not wake up the next morning! How they prayed ...Please Hashem ,spare me of the 15,000 that must go this year, let me live.But there was hope - it was only a percentage of the people that would perish....

Let's fast forward. Year 39, there are now 30,000 left.It's now a 50/50 chance of survival.As heartfelt as those prayers were that night, it was with the knowledge that they still stand a chance.... It's now the 40th year. Of the men that left Missrayim, 585,000 had already perished.Only 15,000 remained alive.It was now their turn.....

They dug graves...

The following morning all 15,000 men woke up alive !
“ We must have miscalculated the date” they said.And so, the following night they once again slept in those graves .The following morning , again - they all woke up .This went on until the 15th of the month -when there was a full moon.That is when they realized that Hashem had annulled the decree, and for that they made a joyous celebration on the 15th of Ab.Hence, the 15th of Ab is a joyous day.

But why *did* they wake up the following morning? Why were they spared?

Every year, before going to sleep that night, they prayed.Yet in the back of their minds they knew it was only a chance- there was also a chance they would live.

The 40th year, the last 15,000 men felt the noose around their neck.

It was no longer just a chance

Such prayers, when one feels in a state of total helplessness, with no one to rely on but Hashem - work wonders !

And so, the decree was annulled.

Yom Kippur in the same token has that potential.

It is a day of repentance, atonement, - and *prayer* .

We come before Hashem.We ask Hashem for Forgiveness.

We ask for Life ,Health,Sustenance and more.

If we realize that we are helpless , that we don't stand a chance in our own merits , as it says “כדלים וכרשים דפקנו דלתיך” then as the Pasuk says in tehilim קרוב ה לכל קראיו לכל אשר יקראוהו
באמת.

In an article on Tefilah, Rav Yechezkel Levinstein ztl writes that it is an established fact that a person can only receive blessing in this world through prayer. There is no other way: Torah and good deeds

do provide enormous merits,of course, but with regards to giving a person what he wants ,they serve only to boost the effectiveness of ones prayers . Without *tefillah* , nothing can be attained.

One might ask ,we see many people with a lot of blessing in their lives who don't even know how to pray.How do we explain that?

The answer is that if they did not pray, then someone else prayed for them .It could have been their parents , grandparents, or even their friends.The fact will always remain:Prayer is the only way to attain blessing from Hashem.

Let us rise to the occasion, realize that time is of the essence, that we have no future unless we create it now.

May our Prayers be answered as we say in Kaddish

“תקבל צלותנא ובעותנא עם צלותהון ובעותהון דכל בית יש-
ראל קדם אבונא דבשמיא וארעא, אמן

May we all merit to achieve true atonement, and be written and sealed for a healthy, blissful, and prosperous year of life.

May this be *The* year that ushers in the final redemption, Amen.

כתיבה וחתימה טובה.

YOM KIPPUR

By Vivien Hidary

The name for this high and holy holiday, is *Yom Kippur*. It is a strange name for a holiday where we expose all our misdeeds. A better name for the day where our misdeeds are on display and our shortcomings are listed systemically, might be one relating to divulging, or disclosing, yet surprisingly, it's the day of concealment.

The holiday was given its name by Gd. "*On the tenth day of the seventh month is Yom HaKippurim.*" Lev 23:27. The verses continue with the laws of fasting, and services performed. In preparation for this auspicious day, we do *Kaparot* which is a compensation of sorts, or an exchange where we attempt to redeem ourselves. In advance, we ask friends and family to pardon us and we immerse in prayer in the hopes of being inscribed in the Book of Life. Permeating the day is the theme of forgiveness, which would once again require revealing and admitting our transgressions, adding to our confusion as to why its name connotes a camouflage or cover-up.

One way to understand why Gd would entitle this day Yom Kippur, might be to find the first reference for the *Kippur* verb. It appears when Noah is instructed to build an ark. Gd tells him "*Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood, with levels and coat it (kaparta) inside and out*" Gen. 6:14

Now, all we have to do is figure out in what way Yom Kippur is related to Noah's ark. Perhaps the purpose of the coating was to protect the vessel, maybe to water proof it. Except the instruction was counterintuitive, "*inside and out.*" The inside was being coated first, protected, when in reality the outside was the part vulnerable to the impending deluge.

It is this very quandary that is the key to explaining our holiday. It's clearly not intended to be a day where we try to sweep our indiscretions under the rug, a pulling of the wool over Gd's eyes. Perhaps the internal coating concept is where we should focus our attention.

Picture a covered storefront undergoing construction. It's usually boarded up with a sign that says "Please pardon our appearance, as we undergo improvements to serve you better." In essence, we too are works in progress. We express to HaShem that we recognize that corrections need to happen, aware that we are in need of renovation. Gd is akin to the inspector. We know that our condition doesn't yet warrant His granting us the Certificate of Occupancy. So we pray He doesn't issue us a violation, or worse, shut us down. Since Gd is also our Father and King, we ask that He grant us the means to continue constructing. Health, wealth, good tidings, physical and mental strength, are requested and required so that we can better serve Him.

The quest for self-improvement is an ongoing project. Every year we need to pass inspection and prove we are once again a worthy investment. Like a windowfront, what is in the inside is reflected outward. Next week, is Succot, the holiday where we take our homes from the inside out. Our homes, our private domains are on display. Like the ark, first we safeguard our families, with education and transmission of values inside our homes, so we can safely navigate the unpredictable forces outdoors.

May HaShem bless us with health and happiness on our voyage together into the New Year.

BEN ADAMA

"Ben Adama," or "Son of Earth," is considered one of the most sacred and thought-provoking hymns of the entire Sephardic liturgy. It is said to be composed by H Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1167) during the Golden Age of Spain. There is a tradition among Syrian Jews to sing this poem on the eve of Yom Kippur after Arbit. In addition, according to Aleppo sources, including H Moshe Ashear, it's melody is used for the Qaddish on Yom Kippur as well as Shabbat Shuba. "Ben Adama" is especially appropriate for Yom Kippur, because it is a composition of introspection of some of the existential aspects of life. In each of it's ten stanzas, the author describes one decade of a person's life. The general message of the poem is to take a step back from where you are in life and think about the different stages of your life. The last verse concludes "Happy is the man who considers himself to be a transient visitor," because all of us are only here for a short time, and once life is over, we should have no regrets.

Sephardic Pizmonim Project





Son of the Earth should remember his birth
Because at the time of the End, He will return to his source

בן אדמה יזכר בְּמוֹלְדוֹתָו
כִּי לַעֲתָ קֵץ יָשׁוּב לְיוֹלְדוֹתָו

"Arise and Succeed!", They say to the five year old
From the very first sunrise of sunrises
In his mother's bosom he shall rest and not depart
He will take the neck of his father with him on his journeys

"קוּם וְהִצְלַח!" אָמְרוּ לְבֶן חֲמִישׁ
מֵעֲלוֹתָיו עוֹלָיִם עֲלוֹת וְשֶׁמֶשׁ
בֵּין שְׂדֵי אִם יִשְׁכַּב וְאֵל יָמֵשׁ
צִנְאָרֵי אָב יִקַּח לְמַרְפְּכָתוֹ.

What ethics can you provide to the ten year old
In a short while he will grow up and make his way
Say to him – Nice, Nice – and he will repeat...
His adolescence to his parents and his family

מָה תְּאֵי צִוּוֹן מוֹסֵר לְבֶן עֶשְׂרִי?
עוֹד מְעַט קֵט יִגְדֵל וְיִוָּסֵר
דַּבְּרוּ לוֹ "חֵן חֵן" וְיִתְבַּשֵּׁר
שְׁעֵשׂוּעֵיו – יוֹלְדָיו וּמִשְׁפָּחָתוֹ.

How pleasant are the days of the twenty year old
Light as the hart lingering on the mountain
Repelled by ethics, turns away from the teachers voice
In favor of his own grace and ability

מָה זְעִימִים יָמִים לְבֶן עֶשְׂרִים
קֵל כְּעֶפֶר דּוֹלֵג עַלֵּי הָרִים
בְּזוֹ לְמוֹסֵר, לוֹעֵג לְקוֹל מוֹרִים
יַעֲלֵת חֵן חֲבָלוֹ וּמִלְכָּדָתוֹ.

The thirty year old fell into the hands of a wife
He wakes up and looks around - !Behold - he is caught in a snare!
He is surrounded by the children of his arrows
(Fulfillin) The hearts desires of his wife and children

בֶּן שְׁלִשִׁים נָפַל בְּיַד אִשְׁת׃
קָם וְהִבִּיט – הִנּוּ בְּתוֹךְ רְשֵׁת!
אֶלְצוּוֹהוּ סָבִיב בְּנֵי קִשְׁת׃
מִשְׁאָלוֹת לֵב בְּנָיו וְלֵב אִשְׁתּוֹ.

When he reaches forty he is bent and stooped
He is happy with his lot, whether bad or pleasant
He runs to his concern and abandons his friends
On his own effort he will stand guarded

נָע וְנִכְנַע מִשִּׁיג לְאַרְבָּעִים
שֵׁשׁ בְּחֻלְקוֹ – אִם רַע וְאִם נָעִים
רָץ לְדַרְכּוֹ וַיַּעֲזֹב רַעִים
עַל עֲמָלוֹ יַעֲמֵד בְּמִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ

The fifty year old remembers the days that went up in vapor
He will mourn because approaching are the days of his mourning
Despised in his eyes is all the wealth of the Earth
Because he fears perhaps his time is coming nigh

בֶּן חֲמִשִּׁים יִזְכֹּר יָמֵי הַבָּל
יֵאָבֵל כִּי קָרְבוּ יָמֵי אָבֵל
בְּזוֹ בְּעֵינָיו אֵת כָּל יָקָר תִּבְּל
כִּי יִפְחַד פֶּן קָרְבָה עֵתוֹ.

They ask : What has happened to the sixty year old?
There is not in his advice branches nor roots
Because his muscles are weak and failing
They will not stand with him during his war

שִׂאלוּ: מָה הָיָה לְבֶן שִׁשִּׁים?
אֵין בְּעֵצָיו בְּדִים וְשָׂרְשִׁים
כִּי שָׂרִידָיו דָּלִים וְנִחְלָשִׁים
לֹא יִקוּמוּן אִתּוֹ בְּמִלְחָמָתוֹ.

If his years arrived to seventy
His words are not seen nor heard
He will become only a weight to his relatives and friends
A burden to his spirit and his cane

אִם שָׁנוּתָיו נִגְעוּ אֵלַי שִׁבְעִים
אֵין דְּבָרָיו נִרְאִים וְנִשְׁמָעִים
רַק לְמִשְׁאֵל יְהִיָּה עַלֵּי רַעִים
מַעֲמָס עַל נַפְשׁוֹ וּמִשְׁעָנָתוֹ.

The eighty year old is tiresome to his children
His heart is not with him, neither are his eyes
Despised and turned away to his son and his neighbors
There is gall in his cup, and wormwood in his bread

בֶּן שְׁמֹנִים טָרַח עַלֵּי בְּנָיו
אֵין לְבָבוֹ עִמּוֹ וְלֹא עֵינָיו
בוֹז וְלֹעֵג לְבָנוֹ וְלִשְׁכָּנָיו
רֹאשׁ בְּכוֹסוֹ גַּם לַעֲנָה פָּתוֹ.

After this, how long will he be considered?
Praised is the person who is considered a visiting transient (in the world)

אַחֲרֵי זֶה כַּמַּת יְהִי נִחְשָׁב
אַשְׁרֵי אִישׁ נִחְשָׁב כְּגַר תּוֹשָׁב

There is not in his heart thought nor calculation...
at all at the end of his spirit and business

אֵין בְּלִבּוֹ רַעְיוֹן וְלֹא מַחְשָׁב
רַק בְּאַחֲרִית נַפְשׁוֹ וּמִשְׁכָּרָתוֹ.

SUKKOT: THE ULTIMATE EQUALIZER

By: Rabbi Richard Tobias

Sukkot is a holiday that is saturated with misvot. One of those misvot is that of the *arba'at haminim*; the taking of the four species, namely, the lulav, etrog, hadasim, and aravot. The midrash writes that each of those four minim represents a different type of Jew. The etrog, which has both a good taste and good smell, symbolizes those who have both Torah and good deeds. The lulav, has a taste but no smell, symbolizing those who have Torah but no good deeds. The hadasim, which have a smell but no taste, represent those who have good deeds but no Torah. Lastly, the arava has neither taste nor smell and therefore represents those who have neither Torah or good deeds. The misva on Sukkot is to bring all four of those minim, all of those types of Jews, together, unifying them in the misva of *na'anuim*, shaking the lulav. Sukkot is the holiday which represents the unity of the Jewish people. It is the holiday that tells us that as we usher in a new year, the only way to survive that new year is to do so as a nation, as a unified klal Yisrael - and it is a message that culminates the entire period of the Yamim Noraim.

The Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah we read the parasha of Nisabim. The end of that Parasha discusses the concept of Teshuba and tells us that no matter how low you may sink, there is always a chance to rekindle your relationship with Borei Olam. The irony is that while the parasha ends with the concept of Teshuba and new beginnings, it begins by discussing a person who has done something unforgivable; something that Teshuba cannot erase! What crime did that person commit that is so incorrigible? Says the Torah in the beginning of parashat Nisabim, “*ki bishrirut libi elekh*” - after hearing the rededication of the brit between Hashem and the Jewish people on Har Gerizim and Har Eval this person says, “no thanks, I’m not interested” and in so doing, removes himself from the greater whole.” As a result, the pesukim continue, “*lo yoveh Hashem siloah Lo.*” Hashem cannot forgive such a person because to take yourself out of the klal is to negate what it means to be a Jew. We exist as a unit or we struggle to survive.

That message continues during the *aseret yimei teshuba*, during which one is obligated to ask forgiveness from his fellow man, lest someone hold a grudge against him. So long as there is strife amongst the Jewish people, G-d cannot afford them complete *kapara*. This concept is a manifestation of the message given on Har Sinai. At Matan Torah we got two *luhot*, one of which detailed the misvot between us and Hashem and the other the misvot between us and our fellow person; fifty-fifty. If one half of that is not fully intact, then neither can the other half be. If our interpersonal relationships are not 100%, then our relationship with Borei Olam is not 100%. Yet again, it is a lesson of the unified nation, because we exist as a unit or we struggle to survive.

That message continues into Yom Kippur, during which we read Sefer Yonah as the haftarah for mincha. One who is sensitive to the text of Yonah picks up on something very interesting in the beginning of the first perek. Yonah was told by Borei Olam that he had to warn the city of Nineveh that they would be destroyed unless they do teshuba. Yonah tries to evade Hashem and his message, climbing aboard a boat set to leave Eretz Yisrael. When we are first introduced to the sailors on that boat, the text calls them *malakhim* - not angels, but in this case, sailors. It is a fine title, a title of stature, as the Torah gives them *kavod*. Later in that very same perek, however, we find that the text changes their title. After those sailors find out that Yonah is trying to escape from Hashem, the *pasuk* calls them *anashim*, just plain old men. Why the change in title? The *mefarshim* answer that once they realized that they were standing before Hashem, they became just plain old men. The same is true of all of us. In our daily lives we may have stature, we may have clout, we may have money, titles and power that differentiate us. However, when we stand before Hakadosh Baruch Hu, we are all human beings. We were all created with the same *neshama*. The message being conveyed during the climax of Yom Kippur is that we must acknowledge that we are all one, even though we may not be the same. We may look different, speak differently, come from different parts of the world, but we’re all part of the same nation, and the only way that we will continue to survive both as individuals and as a people, is through our unity.

The culminating message of Sukkot is *ahdut Yisrael*. We shake the four species and bring together all different types of Jews. We sit in the *sukkah*, the ultimate equalizer, for seven days. Sukkot are all the same. We are all subject to the elements, we all have the same *misva*, and we all leave our homes, which differentiate us, and spend time in the temporary dwelling place that strips all of us down. We are all *anashim*. We are one. And that is how we begin the year.

As you sit in the *sukkah* this holiday season, remember the message of sefer Yonah, and of parashat Nisabim and of the *aseret Yimei Teshuva* and of the *arba'at haminim* and of the *sukkah* itself. We, as a people, have a shared history and a shared destiny, but we cannot pay proper homage to that history or fulfill that destiny, if we in fact, do not share a mutual respect for each other, as well.

THE LULAB AND ETROG

By Mr. Morris Arking

The Torah explicitly states the reason for sitting in the Sukkah as it says, “So that your generations will know that I settled you in Sukkot when I took you from the land of Egypt...” (VaYiqra 23:43). But the Torah does not provide any reason for taking the four species (Lulab, Etrog, Hadass and ‘Arabah), leaving it to the commentators to provide a reason.

In the Guide for the Perplexed (3:43), HaRambam wrote that we take the four species to show recognition that HaShem took us from the barren desert into the Land of Israel, which is a land of produce. By taking an Etrog which has a most pleasant fragrance and a Lulab which comes from a beautiful date tree and Hadassim and ‘Arabot which are fine leaves and grass, we are thanking HaShem for the fertile Land of Israel. The Sukkah is in recognition for proving for us and protecting us in the desert, and the Lulab and Etrog is for then bringing us into the Land of Israel. Ibn ‘Ezra also alludes to this reason as well (commentary to VaYiqra 23:40). HaRambam explained that these four species were chosen because they are found in abundance in the Land of Israel, they have a pleasant appearance, and they stay fresh longer than most other species.

It is also noteworthy that agriculturally we celebrate the final harvest on Sukkot. Therefore, it is appropriate to take beautiful samples of the land’s produce and thank HaShem with them on Sukkot. According to this aspect of the Missvah, the Sukkah signifies HaShem providing for us in difficult times as the Sukkah is a flimsy hut in comparison to a regular house. Even in those difficult times HaShem is watching over us and helping us manage. The Lulab and Etrog signify HaShem’s blessings in times of plenty when the land is producing beautiful crops. In difficult times one has to maintain their faith in HaShem and remember that ultimately, He provides for everyone. Sitting in the Sukkah, an insecure dwelling place, which reminds us of being provided for in the desert, where there was no sustenance, highlights HaShem’s providence in difficult times. Lulab and Etrog reminds us that HaShem is the true source of our blessings in plentiful times, when man has the tendency to become haughty. Taking the four species to fulfill a Missvah at the time of the harvest reminds us to show gratitude to HaShem for His agricultural blessings.

There is still another dimension to the Missvah of Lulab and Etrog. Our Rabbis taught us that on Sukkot the world is judged regarding its water supply (Mishnah: Rosh HaShanah 1:2). R David Abudarham (Arba’ah Minim pg 295 Jerusalem 1963 edition) explained that when we pray for water on Sukkot we hold four species that require a lot of water to grow beseeching HaShem for a year of abundant rainfall. The Gemara (Sukkah 37b) taught that we wave the Lulab to request the appropriate weather conditions for agricultural success. We wave to the East, West, North and South to request the absence of destructive winds such as hurricanes and tornadoes. Waving up and down is a request to prevent destructive precipitation that could adversely affect the produce of the ground.

The Lulab and Etrog are used for thanking HaShem for giving us the Land of Israel, and an annual harvest. They are also a reminder that the produce and our sustenance is from HaShem. Simultaneously they accompany us in our request for a blessed upcoming rainy season, with the absence of damaging weather conditions. May the merit of this Missvah give us the privilege to return to the Land of Israel with the coming of the Mashiah Bimherah B’Yamenu!



SUKKOT

THOUGHTS FOR A MORE MEANINGFUL HOSHANOT AND HOSHANA RABA

By Nathan I. Dweck

The Hoshanot are among the least understood and least explained practices that we have. Why are we going around the bimah? Why must the Torah be in the middle? What are we requesting with our prayer of “hoshana”? Why do we go around seven times on Hoshana Raba?

Zecher leMikdash - The hoshanot we do today are a remembrance to the Hoshanot that were done in the times of the Beit Ha'mikdash. The gemara in Sukkah (45a) discusses each day of Sukkot the Kohanim in the Beit Ha'mikdash would encircle the mizbeyach and proclaim “ana Hashem hoshiya na” (please Hashem save us now). On the seventh day they would go around seven times. This is a halacha leMoshe miSinai with no reference in the text. When the Beit Ha'mikdash was destroyed, the Rabbis instituted that we should continue the practice with the bimah of our synagogues substituting for the mizbeyach.

Yericho - When Benei Israel conquered the city of Yericho they walked around the wall of the city once each day for 7 days and on the 7th day they walked around 7 times and the wall fell. We too walk around the bimah with the sefer Torah on it signifying that we seek to break down the barriers between us and the Torah.

What are we asking for - #1 Parnasa- Throughout the hoshanot we ask Hashem, hoshiya na (please save us). What are we requesting to be saved from? I asked and looked around and it is not so clear. Rabbi Churba, who wrote a book on the Hoshanot, explained that similar to our kavana when we are do the na'anoim (shaking the lulav), we are asking Hashem to remove the bad dews that interfere with us getting parnasa and beracha. This is what the gemara in Sukka explains by the na'anoim and we see the text in the hoshanot reference this a bit as well. So effectively we are asking Hashem for a bountiful year (and to block the bad influence of the satan). This fits well with gemara in Rosh Hashana which says “be'hag nidonim ahl ha'mayim”, that on Sukkot we are judged on the water (i.e., our crop/food for the year) and so with the words “hoshana” we can have kavana that we are asking Hashem to save us from bad and bless us with a bountiful year. To further this point, we know that “ha'kol holech achar ha'hitum”, everything goes after the end, and so maybe that is one reason on the last day of Sukkot, Hoshana Raba, we increase our requests for a good crop and a bountiful year. Hoshana Raba is our final seal of judgment for the year.

What are we asking for - #2 Protection - The Maharsha brings down that in doing the hakafot we are asking Hashem, that he should put a protection around us from our difficulties. As it says “from all your sufferings I will save you, the angel of Hashem dwells around those who fear him”. Maharsha explains that is why we did hakafot around the city of Yericho, for the purpose of causing our enemies to fall, and that is the idea behind going around the mizbeyach in the times of the Beit ha'mikdash. I also saw the Seder Ha'yom learns we are asking Hashem to save us from all our difficulties and to annul the plans of those that seek to do bad to us.

Ana Hashem Hoshiya Nah -The Mishna in Sukkah brings down a machloket as to what was said by the Kohanim when they encircled the mizbeyach. Hachamim hold they would say “ana Hashem hoshiya nah”. Rav Yehuda holds that they would instead say “ani va'hu hoshiya na”, I and him save us now. “Him” is referring to Hashem. We are suggesting that not only we need a salvation, but so too Hashem needs a salvation, connoting that Hashem is also currently in pain from our pain. This is based on the pasuk in tehillim “imo anochiy be'sara” that Hashem is in pain when his people are in exile. Rashi, in Sukka (45a) says “Ani Vaho” are two of G-d's names that are concealed in three verses in parshat Beshalach that have 72 letters each (Shemot 14:19-21). Running the first and third verses forward and the middle verse backwards, the first letters spell “Vaho” and the 37th letters (the first letters in the second half) spell “Ani.”

Erchatz be'nikayon kapay - We begin each day's hoshanot with the line of “erchatz be'nikayon kapay”, I wash my hands in purity, “ve'esobeba eht mizechacha Hashem”, and I will encircle your mizbeyach Hashem. As opposed to washing our hands physically, here we are expressing that I washed my hands “in purity”, that I cleansed myself spiritually. We are suggesting that now that we have been through the teshuba of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, and so to say, washed ourselves in purity, we proceed to give praise to Hashem.

The format of the text - We begin with “le'maancha” (for your sake). We are asking Hashem that we should be saved “for your sake”, so that we could continue serving Him. The next paragraph discusses creation with the following three paragraphs referencing the avot; Abraham, Yitshak, and Yaakov. In mentioning the avot we are attempting to be answered based on their merit. In the paragraph regarding creation, on the first day we mention what Hashem created on the first day, on the second what he created on the second day, and so on. Throughout the hoshanot we cite references to the number of the day it is and make requests relevant to that day.

What are those words in small text - In the regular machzor, after each of the first four paragraphs it says the word “hoshiyenu” written in a different font. I never understood what we should be saying there. I looked it up in another siddur and apparently this word is short for “hoshiyenu be'hagigat yamim **echad**” (save us on this first day of celebration). And each day the number changes corresponding to the day. On Hoshana Raba hoshiyenu means “hoshiyenu be'hakafat pe'amim shenayim (save us in this second hakafa).

THE TORAH'S TOP 10 REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS

Dr. Murray Mizrachi

In honor of Simhat Torah, I would like to submit my list for the top 10 revolutionary ideas put forth in the Hebrew Bible. It is these ideas that continue to make the Bible, our holy torah, the all-time international best seller. It is my hope that discussion of this article will reinvigorate us as we restart the reading and study of the torah this holiday.

While the torah's revolutionary program was intended to change a status quo in ancient times, it continues to do so today, enriching our own lives and lighting the way for billions of Christians, Muslims and humanity in general.

1. **Monotheism**

Mesopotamians and Egyptians believed that Marduk and Ra were the supreme gods of their respective cultures who subordinated all other gods in the ancient pantheon of paganism. Not so in Judaism. There is only one Creator, and this same entity is all others. For worshippers there is no need to compete in worship, fear retribution or appease any intermediaries or auxiliary powers, only God is to be revered. This is why the *Shema* has become a central mantra to Judaism.

2. **Creation**

The opening verses of Genesis teach us of a Creator who created the world with a beginning point in time. The narratives of Noah, Abraham and the Children of Israel teach us that the God of History, *Bore Olam*, has a vested interest in ensuring progress of humanity from the time of creation. Pagans believed that humankind was subject to the random consequences of celestial battles fought between gods. Famine occurred because the sea god was in conflict with the sun god and so forth. Man's actions were secondary to the really important things happening in the clouds. Without a starting point, time passed by in meaningless cycles controlled by deities beyond man's control. Monotheistic creation allows for humanity the possibility of improving from a singular point in time as history marches forward.

3. **Adam**

Humanity all originates from a single man- Adam. He like all others is made from the dust of the earth- *Adamah*. This commonality is true of people of all shapes, colors and sizes. We are all flesh and blood and of a single origin. Yet, there is also something special about man, different than a beast or tree. We are endowed with a *Selem Elohim* which

tasks us with the responsibility of *Imatio Dio*. While we are all born with an equity of opportunity it is up to us to live up to the Torah's holy ideas and produce a great outcome.

4. **Freedom of Choice**

Predestination and fate play major roles, even in modern religions such as Calvinism and Presbyterians. The Bible teaches us that we have the freedom and responsibility of choice and will be rewarded accordingly. Adam and Eve eat from the forbidden fruit and suffer the consequences. Cain murders his brother in violent jealousy. God responds by remarking to Cain: "If you do well, shall it not be lifted up? And if you do not well, sin will coucheth at the door; and unto thee is its desire, but thou may rule over it." (Bereshit 4:7). Individualism, Self-determination and ultimately self-actualization all progress naturally from freedom of choice for which we will be rewarded or punished. While greater national events or natural disasters might be beyond our control, we as individuals can always be in control of our own actions to enhance our own lives and those around us.

5. **Limitation on Terrestrial Power.**

No one is above the rule of law in the Torah's system. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar serve as the archetypical tyrants with unchecked power for the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Empires. Both men were reduced from their royal entrapments and 'mandate of heaven' to be subdued by God in the Bible's narrative (See the books of Exodus and Daniel respectively). Similarly, the Kings of Israel were limited by the rules in *parshat Shofetim* and rebuke of the prophets. The Davidic monarchy is only ensured when the rulers uphold the torah. The overall message is that only God is supreme, and no aristocracy or monarch is above the law.

6. **Moral Observance of the Law**

While ancient pagans believed that ritual was performed for the benefit or the appeasement of various Gods, our holy prophets remind us otherwise. Prayer, sacrifice and fasts are for the benefit of the worshiper and humanity, not the creator. The ultimate goal for the torah Jew is perfection of deed and justice in society. Doing right by one's fellow man is as important, if not more important than ritual observance (See Yesha'ya 2 for example). For this reason the rabbis considered the golden rule **ואהבת לרעך כמוך** to be just that (see for example Hillel's position BT Shabbat 31a).

7. **Rule of Law**

The bible's prescription for society is one in which justice is uniformly applied across the legal system. Unlike say Hamurabbi's code where an average citizen's life is worth less than a nobleman's and immigrants had no rights, the Bible's system was different. Vayikra 24:22 states: . Unlike

other societies of the ancient world, one system of law applies in the torah's system. The resident alien and the king are subject to the same laws. If a slave-owner kills or injures a slave, he is punished (Shemot 21) There is only one standard of law, given by one God which all people are bound.

8. Due Process

Witnesses and evidence are required to prosecute. Unlike Wahhabis or other primitive faiths, accusations needed standing. In cases where a man's testimony was accepted over a Women's the torah's innovation of the *Sotah* sets a precedent, that even in this extreme case of a suspected adulterer one is always innocent until proven guilty.

9. Individual responsibility

Tribalism threatened ancient societies. Mutli- generational feuds lead to revenge and honor killings in destructive cycles of anarchy. The Bible states that only one who sins is responsible for their own actions: "The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers; every man shall be put to death for his own sin" (Debarim 24:16). This statute limits accountability and recalls the ethics of responsible individualism cited above. Society should not punish or judge entire groups based off the poor actions of the single rotten apple that could have happened generations prior. Such grudges prevent progress and hold society back.

10. Repentance

No matter how far we fall, we can come back, and God will accept our repentance. (Debarim 30:4). This innovation allowed for individuals who erred or even a whole nation a path forward. Rather than permanently ostracize someone or dwell on sins of past generations, the Bible reminds us that there is a rehabilitation plan and that God seeks our self-improvement. It is never too late to recover and do better.

As we begin to read and study the Bible anew this *Simhat Torah*, I hope that readers of this article, will remind me of other ideas that I have missed. It is my hope that this short list will stimulate discussion at your holiday tables and be an inspiration to discover and re- discover the beauty of torah study. May we all redouble our efforts in torah and reap the positive impact upon our lives and realize the profound power to collectively develop of human society.

SEPHARDIC APPROACH TO HALAKHA

By Sheldon N. Goldman

With the High Holiday season upon us, let us look at the Sephardic Approach to Halakha.

Since the Holy Torah was given to physical human beings who are always subject to changes stemming from differences in history and time, in rulers and decrees, in nature and climate, in states and realms — therefore, all Torah's words were given in marvelous, wise ambiguity; thus, they can receive any true interpretation at any time ... Indeed the Torah of Truth, inscribed by G-d's finger, engraved upon the Tablets — will not change nor be renewed, for ever and ever.

In other words, the words of the holy Torah are eternal, yet the eternalness of the Torah is manifested specifically in its inexhaustible capacity to yield multiple meanings, each appropriate to a different human reality.

A prime example is Rabbi Benzion Meir Hai Uziel (1880-1953), born in the Old City of Jerusalem to an ancient and illustrious Sephardic family. From 1912 to 1939 he served as Sephardic rabbi of Jaffa and Tel Aviv and from 1939 until his death as chief Sephardic rabbi of Israel. In the introduction to the first volume of his collected responses, *Mishpetei Uziel* (1955), he totally rejects the central premise of European Orthodoxy and stresses that halakha must respond to modern developments:

In every generation, conditions of life, changes in values, and technical and scientific discoveries — create new questions and problems that require solution. We may not avert our eyes from these issues and say "Torah prohibits the New," i.e., anything not expressly mentioned by earlier sages is ipso facto forbidden. A fortiori, we may not simply declare such matters permissible. Nor may we let them remain vague and unclear, each person acting with regard to them as he wishes. Rather, it is our duty to search halakhic sources, and to derive, from what they explicate, responses to currently moot issues "In all my responsa, I never inclined towards leniency or strictness according to my personal opinions; rather,

my intention and striving were always to search and discover the truth. To the extent that my understanding enabled me, I walked in the light of earlier halakhic masters, whose waters we drink and whose light enlightens us; With this holy light, which issues from the source of the hidden, concealed Light, I illuminated my eyes.”

Thus Uziel rejects the path of both Orthodoxy and Reform. He states that halakha can and should develop through hermeneutics and analogy, as applied by halakhists deeply motivated to discover the truth. Uzziel sees halakha as far from a finite set of normative dicta; rather, he requires halakhists to discover anew how Jews should relate to developments in human life, values, and science, following the light contained in earlier rabbinic writings, in order to illuminate thought on contemporary issues.

A second example is Rabbi Haim David HaLevy, born in Jerusalem in 1924 and educated in Jerusalem’s Sephardic yeshivas. He became a member of Israel’s Chief Rabbinate Council in 1964 and served as chief rabbi of Tel Aviv from 1973 until his death in 1998. In response to criticism directed against him by an unnamed Orthodox rabbi, HaLevy rejected that rabbi’s assertion that commitment to Judaism entails refraining from halakhic creativity. Because all legislation requires nearly constant revision due to “changes in the conditions of life,” how is it, asks HaLevy, that the laws of Holy Torah, revealed to Moses thousands of years ago, can still function and guide Jews today? He responds:

“This is possible only because permission was given to Israel’s sages in each generation to renew halakha as appropriate to the changes of time and events. Only by virtue of this was the continuous existence of Torah in Israel possible, enabling Jews to follow the way of Torah ... It is only by virtue of that flexibility that the People of Israel, through the many novel and useful rulings innovated by Israel’s sages over the generations, could follow the path of Torah and its commandments for thousands of years.”

The similarity between HaLevy and Uziel is striking: the same Torah can serve as the basis of Jewish life for thousands of years despite far-reaching changes in society, history, science and culture, because the flexibility inherent in its words, whose potential is realized through the creative endeavors of the rabbis of each generation. Perennial renewal is a sine qua non of authentic halakha. Clearly, the basic orientation of Sephardic rabbis, as reflected in these passages from Uziel and HaLevy, differs from that of Ashkenazic Orthodoxy.

References:

1. Loving Truth and Peace: The Grand Religious World of Rabbi Benzion Uziel by Rabbi Marc Angel, 1999.
2. Rabbi Haim David HaLevy: Gentle Scholar and Courageous Thinker by Rabbi Marc Angel, 2006.

High Holiday

SCHEDULE

5782/2021

ROSH HASHANA 5782/2021

Ereb Rosh Hashana Monday, September 6

Minha 6:30pm
Candle Lighting 7:01pm

Rosh Hashana - 1st Day Tuesday, September 7

Shaharit 5:15am and 8:00am
(Sunrise 6:29am)
Sefer Torah 10:00am
Shofar 11:00am
Minha followed by Tashlikh starting at 5:10pm
with minyanim running continuously thru 6:10pm
Arbit 7:15pm

Rosh Hashana - 2nd Day Wednesday, September 8

Shaharit 5:15am and 8:00am
(Sunrise 6:30am)
Sefer Torah 10:00am
Shofar 11:00am
Minha 7:00pm
Arbit 7:40pm
Holiday Ends 7:57pm

Som Gedalia Thursday, September 9

Fast Begins 5:14am
Shaharit 6:05, 6:35, 6:50, 8:00am
Selihot begins 50 minutes prior to each Minyan
Minha with Tefillin 6:45pm
Fast Ends 7:36pm

YOM KIPPUR 5782/2021

Ereb Yom Kippur Wednesday, September 15

Minha with Tefillin 1:30pm - 4:00pm
(Continuously)

Stop Eating/
Light Candles 6:46pm

Kal Nidrei 6:55pm

Yom Kippur Thursday, September 16

Shaharit 5:10am (sunrise 6:37am)
and 8:00am

Sefer Torah 11:00am

Minha 4:25pm

Neila 6:25pm

Sunset 7:04pm

Shofar 7:24pm

Fast & Holiday Ends 7:44pm

CONGREGATION BETH TORAH
WISHES ALL ITS CONGREGANTS
A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR



CONGREGATION
BETH TORAH

SUKKOT 5782/2021

Ereb Sukkot Monday, September 20

Candle Lighting	6:37pm
Minha/Arbit	6:40pm

1st Day of Sukkot Tuesday, September 21

Shaharit	6:40, 8:30, 8:45 and 9:00am
Minha/Arbit	6:40pm

2nd Day of Sukkot Wednesday, September 22

Shaharit	6:40, 8:30, 8:45am and 9:00am
Minha	6:40pm
Arbit	7:15pm
Festival Ends	7:34pm

Hol Hamoed Thurs. - Fri, September 23 - 24

Shaharit	6:05, 6:35, 6:50, 8:00 and 9:15am
No Tefillin	
Minha	6:30pm
Friday Night	6:30pm
Candle Lighting	

Shabbat Hol Hamoed Sukkot Saturday, September 25

Shaharit	6:35, 8:30, 8:45 and 9:00am
Minha	6:10pm
Arbit	7:10pm
Shabbat Ends	7:29pm

HOSHA'NA RABA, SHEMINI ASERET SIMHAT TORAH

Hoshana Raba Sunday, September 26

Start	From	Location
6:10am	Vatikin Minyan Vatetpalel Hanna	Main Sanctuary (6:10am)
	Hashem Melekh	(6:32am)
	Ness /Sunrise	(6:47am)
.....		
7:45am	Hashem Melekh	New Sanct. (2nd fl)
.....		
8:30am	Hashem Melekh	Main Sanctuary
.....		
9:15am	Hashem Melekh	New Sanctuary

Candle Lighting	6:27pm
Minha/Arbit	6:25pm

Shemini Aseret Monday, September 27

Shaharit	6:40, 8:30, 8:45, 9:00am
Minha	5:00pm followed by Haqafot
Arbit	7:00pm

Simhat Torah Tuesday, September 28

Shaharit	6:40, 8:30, 8:45am, 9:00am
Haqafot	11:00am
Minha	6:30pm
Arbit	7:05pm
Festival ends	7:22pm

COMING SOON!

THE CLUB

AT BETH TORAH



The heartbeat of Avenue J

4 levels of mixed use space

Indoor/outdoor space

Religious, social, educational... Endless possibilities!

Programming & events for all ages

*If you would like to take part in this exciting project please contact Elliot Shamah
EShamah25@yahoo.com*