

ROSH HASHANA

Batnua



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DEFINITION AND CONTEXT

On the first and second days of the month of Tishrei of the Hebrew calendar, Am Israel celebrates Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of a new year. This holiday is also known by the name Yom Teruah (alluding to the sound of the Shofar), Yom HaDin ("Day of Judgment") and Yom Hazikaron ("Day of Remembrance" – since on this day we remember our actions over the year that is ending as a part of our process of introspection, evaluation and repentance). These names reflect the multiple meanings of the chag and have a common factor: on Rosh Hashanah we are given a moment to reflect on what we have done with our lives over the past year. It is an opportunity to analyze whether we have fulfilled the goals that we had set for ourselves and learned from our mistakes and to "recalculate the route" in case we have not. On Rosh Hashanah, we connect with ourselves and commit to improve in the future. Rosh Hashanah serves as a unique opportunity for us to encourage ourselves to change, to improve and become the best versions of ourselves. Rosh Hashanah is a gift which gives us the possibility to start over but with more experience and knowledge! On Rosh Hashanah, we say goodbye to the previous year with a profound sense of evaluation, and we start over full of initiatives and new projects.



DID YOU KNOW?

- The literal translation of Rosh Hashanah is not "New Year" but rather "Head of the Year". In the tnua, we also tend to use this concept ("head") to refer to the chaverim who assume the responsibility of administrating the different vaadot (Rosh Chinuch, Rosh Tarbut, etc.).
- In Hebrew, the concept of "Rosh Gadol" refers to people who feel the need to do and influence beyond what is required, triggered by their motivation and leadership aptitude. In the Darkenu we find a clear reference related to this concept: "From our first steps as a movement, the principles of "rosh gadol" (someone who takes initiative) and chalutziyut (pioneering) have been leading our chanichim to become natural leaders while placing them at the forefront and encouraging them to take responsibility for our people's destiny."



THE CHAG'S VALUES





SYMBOLS AND CUSTOMS

• Rosh Hashanah Seder

On Rosh Hashanah eve, Am Israel holds a festive family dinner in which are served, in a particular order (hence, the name "Seder"), certain foods that represent wishes for the upcoming new year. Among the foods that are served during the Seder are: dates (symbolizing Israel since these are one of the seven species of the land of Israel and also representing peace, tranquility and love), pomegranate (alluding to the desire of being able to perform many good deeds, like the number of seeds in the rimon), green beans (expressing our desire for prosperity), leeks (symbolizing a year full of friendship), beets (announcing our aspirations for growth and freedom), gourds (wishing that our blessings will be considered), carrots (asking God to judge us positively), fish heads (the head symbolizing the desire to lead and the fish representing fertility) and an apple dipped in honey (symbolizing our desire to have a sweet year).

• Shofar

One of the most representative symbols of Rosh Hashanah is the Shofar. The Shofar is blown one hundred times during the chag, and its three types of sounds are called Tekiah, Shvarim and Teruah. The sound of the Shofar has been given multiple meanings and interpretations, but the most common one perceives it as a call to perform a process of introspection, resulting in repentance for the mistakes being made throughout the year.

- The Israeli media (especially the newspapers) dedicate special editions to the most important events that have occurred during the year in various areas of interest: politics, economy, social issues, etc.



HOLIDAY RELATED QUOTES

"עוד תראה, עוד תראה, כמה טוב יהיה, בשנה, בשנה הבאה." "You will see, you will see, how good it will be, next year." "Next Year", Ehud Manor

"החיים שיש לך, הם החיים שחיית, הבט אחורה בהבנה, מצא את נקודת הבראשית." "The life you have is the life you've lived; look back with understanding, find the starting point." החיים שיש לך, מילים: יונה וולך

"A good year, a good year, a good year. A calm year, a beautiful year, a harmonic year. May this be a good year. A year of peace, of dreams, a year of love." "A Good Year", Lea Naor

"שנה טובה, שנה טובה, שנה טובה, שנה שקטה, שנה יפה, שנה שלווה, שהשנה הזאת תהיה שנה טובה, שנת שלום, ושנת חלום ואהבה." שנה טובה, מילים: לאה נאור



HOLIDAY RELATED ARTICLES

DALIA STEKEL, ROSH CHINUCH TZEIREI AMI

This chag and the values that derive from it are deeply related to the tnu'a. Firstly, Rosh Hashanah is the time of the year when we are offered a chance to change for the better and grow as a people; we seek personal and spiritual improvement, for this is a fundamental principle in Judaism. ... Undoubtedly, this is one of the primary tasks that we have as educators of tnuot noar: the shaping of a human being who constantly aspires to improve both himself and the environment in which he lives. Another common factor between this holiday and the tnu'a is the motivation to learn. On Rosh Hashanah, we repent for the bad things we did during the year. God knows we will be making mistakes again – we are human, and this is inevitable – but as He judges us, God sees in us that we want to grow, learn from our mistakes and improve.... In this sense, I believe that the tnu'a is a unique space that enables us to learn through our experiences, the successful and the not-so-successful ones.

ROMI MORALES, MAZKIRUT OLAMIT HANOAR HATZIONI B'ISRAEL

It is true, human beings have the ability to discern between good and evil, but that does not mean that all human beings choose and opt for the good. Therefore, in Rosh Hashanah, I thank all the madrichim of the tnu'a who, with great love, build educational processes based on values, ideas and principles worthy of admiration, who provide their chanichim with countless tools to form their own paths based on our ethical set of values. And most importantly, I thank them for serving as an example and showing our chanichim that we do not surrender, that beyond just "imagining" as Lennon would say, we can make this world a more just, empathetic and united place. And although we make mistakes at times, the important thing is to be able to learn from our experiences and improve. At the end of the day, this is what our journey in the world is all about: do, live, learn, dream.

HANNAH SZENES: HER LIFE AND DIARY – A Source of Inspiration of Israel HaTzeira B'Argentina

(...) Now what can I say about the world around me – the world that is virtually destroying itself? Or about the tens of thousands of people perishing daily? How shall I grieve for them on the eve of Rosh Hashanah? About the suffering, the pain, the injustice... what can I say, and to whom? He knows – thus there is nothing for me to say on this solemn evening. Do I believe in God? I don't know. For me He is more a symbol and expression of the moral forces in which I believe. Despite everything, I believe the world was created for good and that there is nothing on earth so evil that a ray of light can't seep through, or a pinch of good can't be seen. These are just words. But life will speak for itself; it will justify itself. I know my words are those of one who knows very little about the suffering and evil in the world. My road still lies ahead.



ZMAN LE PEILUT

HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE ROSH HASHANAH IN YOUR KEN?

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