

SOUTH HUNTINGTON JEWISH CENTER

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RABBI IAN S. JACKNIS
HAZZAN BRIAN BARUCH SHAMASH

August 2013

Dear Talmidim (Students),

This year the Jewish New Year comes so early that we won't have begun Religious School yet. I wanted to give you the opportunity to review some information about Rosh Hashanah, so you can enjoy the holiday.

Enclosed is a Rosh Hashanah Packet. Please read and complete the last pages. The packet is due in class the first day of Religious School. All students who complete the packet and remember to hand it in on the **FIRST** day of class will receive a prize.

I look forward to greeting you at Religious School.

L'shanah Tovah!

Ellen Marcus

WHAT IS ELUL?

A Month of Mercy

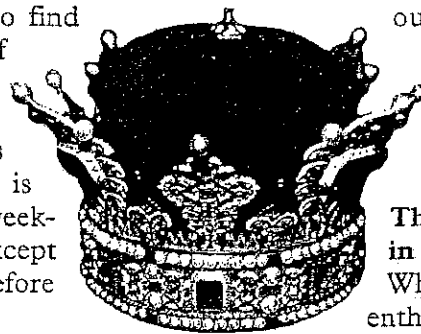
In the generation of the Exodus from Egypt, Moses ascended Mount Sinai three times. The first was to receive the Torah. The second was to plead with G-d for his forgiveness, after the Jewish People sinned in worshipping the golden calf. Then, on the first day of Elul—the month immediately preceding Tishrei—Moses ascended the mountain a third time, to invoke G-d's abundant mercy for our complete atonement. He remained there for forty days, until Yom Kippur, when G-d cleansed us completely, as though we had never sinned. Since then, these days are marked as a special period of Divine grace, during which our sincere

prayers are sure to find favor in the eyes of G-d.

Elul Observances

- The Shofar is sounded every weekday morning, except on the last day before Rosh Hashana.
- Psalm 27 is added to the daily morning and afternoon prayers.
- It is customary to give additional charity each weekday.
- Beginning Saturday night, September 23, and on the following weekday mornings until the eve of Rosh Hashana, Selichot (special penitential prayers) are recited.
- Elul is an appropriate time to

reflect on our actions and attitudes of the previous year, and resolve to correct our shortcomings.



The King in the Field

When the king is enthroned in his palace, he is not easily accessible; audience is granted only to those who have merited his attention. But when the king is in public, anyone may approach him. The Chassidic masters compare the month of Elul to a time when a king, returning to his palace, passes through the surrounding fields and greets his subjects with a shining countenance. In Elul, G-d—the 'King of the Universe'—is available to anyone who turns to Him... and He graciously accepts our petitions and grants our requests.



WHAT IS ROSH HASHANA?

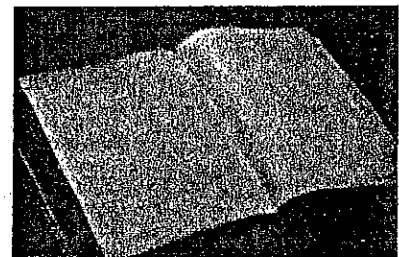
Birthday of the World

Rosh Hashana is the day on which G-d completed the creation of this world, by creating Adam, the original man. Adam's very first act was to proclaim the Al-mighty as King of the Universe. He called upon all creatures: "Come, let us worship, bow down and kneel before G-d, our maker". Each Rosh Hashana, we too proclaim the Kingship of G-d, and reaffirm our commitment to serve Him

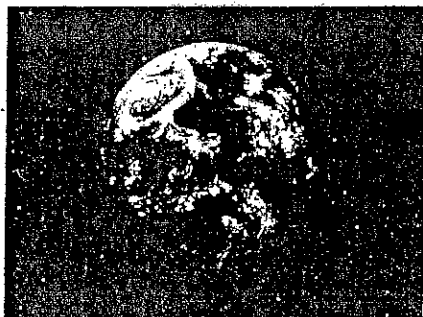
well. Just as on the original Rosh Hashana, G-d created the world for the first time, so each Rosh Hashana He reconsiders and re-evaluates the quality of our relationship with Him, and creates our world anew.

The Book of Life

On the first evening of Rosh Hashana, after services, we exchange the traditional blessing, "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year". Our sages ex-



plain that on Rosh Hashana, we all stand in judgment before G-d—'like a flock of sheep before the shepherd'. If we are worthy, we are 'inscribed' in the 'Book of Life'. Ten days later, on Yom Kippur, the Book is sealed. Through repentance, prayer and charity, we can sweeten the decree, and merit G-d's blessings for health, well-being and prosperity for the coming year.



ROSH HASHANA OBSERVANCES

The Shofar

On the second day of Rosh Hashana, Sunday, Oct. 1, we hear during the daytime the sounding of at least the first thirty of the prescribed blasts of the shofar, the ram's horn.

The shofar, the oldest and most soulful of wind instruments, has many

meanings. Among them:

- It proclaims the coronation of G-d as King of the Universe.
- It 'awakens' us to repent and return to G-d.
- It reminds us of the shofar heard at Mount Sinai, when we accepted G-d's com-

mandments for all time.

- It represents the simple, primal outcry from the depth of the soul.
- It presages the call of the "Great Shofar" which G-d will sound with the coming of Moshiach, who will lead us out of exile and into our Holy Land—speedily, in our days.

Tashlich

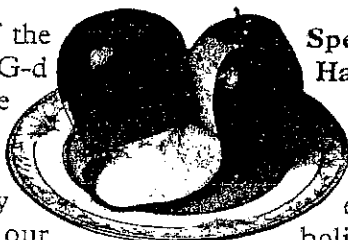
On the second day of Rosh Hashana, Sunday, Oct. 1, following the afternoon prayer, we visit a body of water or pond containing live fish and recite the Tashlich prayers, in which we 'cast away' our sins.



As fish depend upon water, so do we depend upon G-d's providence. Also, a fish's eyes never close, symbolizing G-d's unceasing watchfulness over us.

Special Rosh Hashana Foods

It is customary on Rosh Hashana to eat foods symbolizing sweetness, blessings and abundance. We dip the challah in honey; and afterwards, on the first night, Sept. 29, we eat a piece of apple dipped in honey. After the appropriate blessing on the apple, we add: "May it be Your will to renew for us a good and sweet year". Other customs include eating the head of a fish, pomegranates and carrots.



TEN DAYS OF TESHUVAH

A Return to Essence

The first ten days of Tishrei—two days of Rosh Hashana, the seven days following, and Yom Kippur—are an auspicious time in which to rectify our shortcomings and draw closer to G-d. They are therefore known as the 'Ten days of Teshuvah'.

Teshuvah—frequently translated as repentance—actually means returning. Judaism emphasizes that our essential nature—the Divine spark of the soul—is good. True repentance is best achieved not through harsh self-condemnation, but through the realization that our deepest desire is to do good, in accordance with the will of G-d.

Shabbat Shuvah

The seven days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur are an opportunity to do Teshuvah with respect to each of the seven days of the week—i.e., on the

Monday, we can make amends for whatever wrongs we may have done on all the Mondays of the previous year... and so forth. Shabbat—from the evening of Oct 6th until nightfall on the 7th—is called 'Shabbat Shuvah', after the Prophetic reading for that day: "Return, O Israel, for you have stumbled..."

The Fast of Gedaliah

Monday, Oct. 2, is a fast day. We neither eat nor drink, from approximately two hours before sunrise until 40 minutes after sunset. It commemorates the tragic assassination of Gedaliah, a great Jewish leader during the Babylonian exile.

The Eve of Yom Kippur

On the day preceding Yom Kippur, Sunday, Oct. 8, we eat festive meals, to demonstrate our faith and confidence in G-d's mercy. Another beautiful custom for this day is that of parents

blessing their children with the Priestly Benediction: "May G-d bless you and guard you... May G-d shine His countenance upon you and be gracious to you... May G-d turn His face toward you, and grant you peace."

Yom Kippur atones for sins against G-d, but not for wrongdoings between man and man. It is therefore important, on the day before Yom Kippur, to apologize and seek forgiveness from friends, relatives and acquaintances, to heal any ill feelings which may have arisen.

Five Prohibitions

Yom Kippur is from Sunday evening, Oct. 8, through Monday night, Oct. 9. In addition to the prohibition of work, as on the Sabbath, there are five activities specifically prohibited on Yom Kippur: eating and drinking, anointing oneself with perfumes or lotions, marital relations, washing (for pleasure), and wearing leather shoes.

ROSH HASHANAH BLESSINGS

Practice reading each of these blessings.

LIGHTING THE CANDLES

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who makes us holy with mitzvot, and commands us to kindle the festival lights.

FOR THE FIRST NIGHT

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
שֶׁהֲחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who has given us life, sustained us, and brought us to this season of joy.

DIPPING APPLES IN HONEY

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who creates the fruit of the tree.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ,
שֶׁתַּחֲדִישׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה.

May it be Your will, Adonai our God and God of our ancestors, to renew this year for us with goodness and sweetness.

ROSH HASHANAH NAMES

Rosh Hashanah has four names. Read the explanation for each. Choose one of the names and explain why you consider it to be the most important of the holiday's names.

1. Rosh Hashanah ראש השנה
"Beginning of the Year"

Rosh Hashanah is a celebration of the world's creation, the "birthday" of the world. It marks the first day of the first month, *Tishre*, of the Jewish year.

2. Yom Hadin יום הדין
"Day of Judgment"

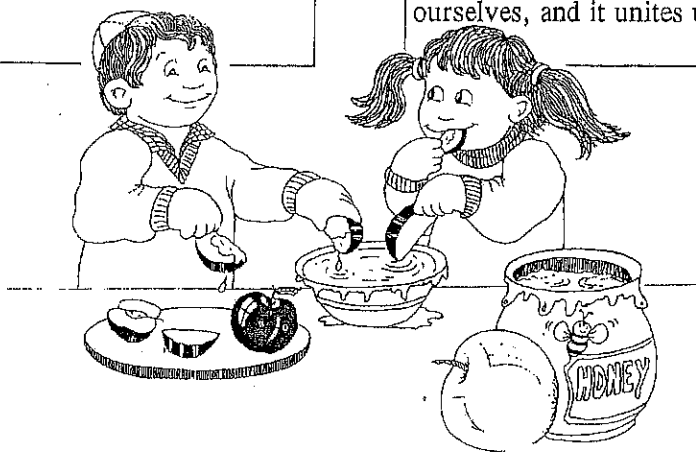
The tradition tells us that on this day we are judged by God for our actions over the past year.

3. Yom Hazikaron יום הזכרון
"Day of Remembrance"

This is the name the Torah gives to Rosh Hashanah. On this day, we look back and remember and try to learn from our actions over the past year.

4. Yom Teruah יום תרועה
"Day of the Sounding of the Shofar"

The shofar (ram's horn) reminds us of the ram Abraham sacrificed in place of his son Isaac. We are commanded to hear its sound. When we hear the shofar in the synagogue, we recall the time that it was sounded when Moses received the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. Its sound calls us to take action to improve ourselves, and it unites us in the service of God.



SHOFAR SOUNDS

The shofar is sounded on Rosh Hashanah during the שחרית service (except on Shabbat in most synagogues), and its blasts signal the end of Yom Kippur. The congregation stands during the Shofar Service. The shofar blower recites two blessings before sounding the shofar.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו
במצותיו וצונו לשמוע קול שופר.

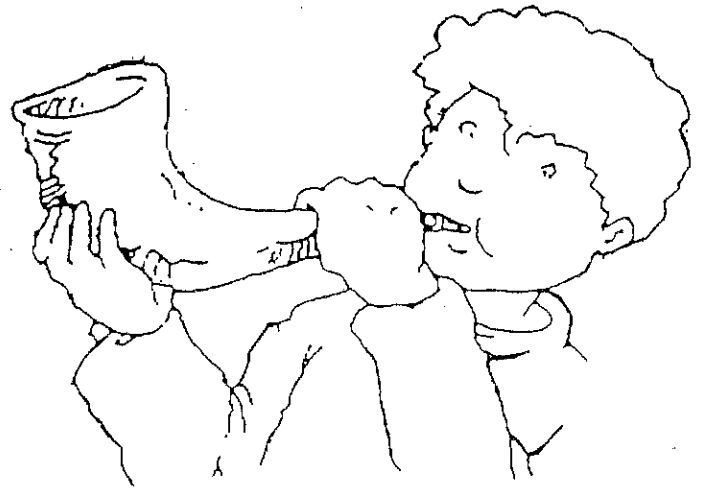
Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who makes us holy with mitzvot, and commands us to hear the sound of the shofar.

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם,
שהחיינו וקימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the world, who has given us life, sustained us, and brought us to this season of joy.

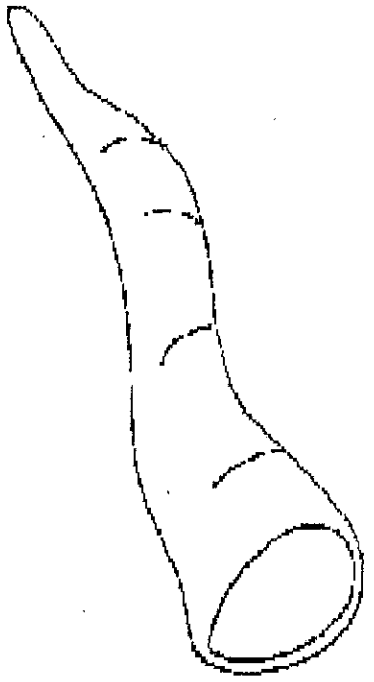
There are three different kinds of shofar sounds:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| תְּקִיעָה | 1 Solid Blast |
| שְׁבָרִים | 3 Short Blasts |
| תְּרוּעָה | 9 Staccato Blasts |

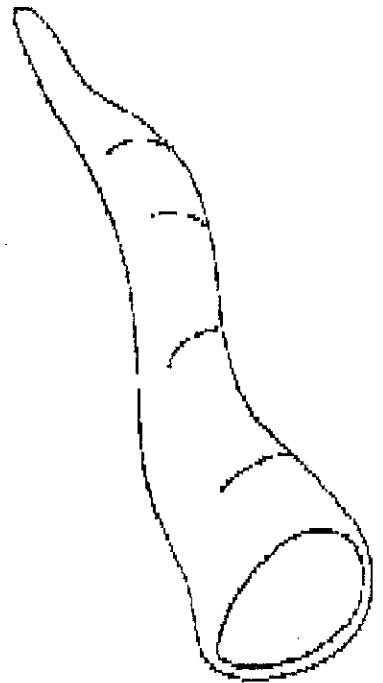


Discussion Question

Do you think it is more effective to communicate with God through the sounds of the shofar or through words? Explain your answer.



My Wish for the New Year



My Wish for the New Year

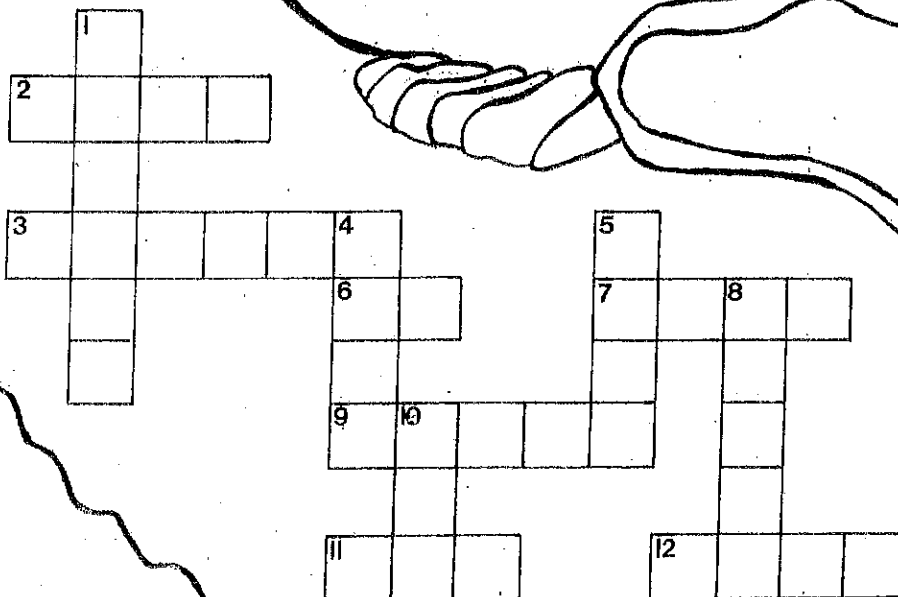
ROSH HASHANAH CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS:

2. "May you be inscribed in the Book of _____ for a good year" is a Rosh Hashanah greeting.
3. The ram's horn that is sounded is called the _____.
6. We wish people a Happy New Year _____ Rosh Hashanah.
7. On Rosh Hashanah we _____ the story of Abraham and Isaac.
9. On Rosh Hashana, we dip apples in _____.
11. Rosh Hashanah comes at the time of the _____ moon.
12. "L'shanah tovah" means "for a good _____".

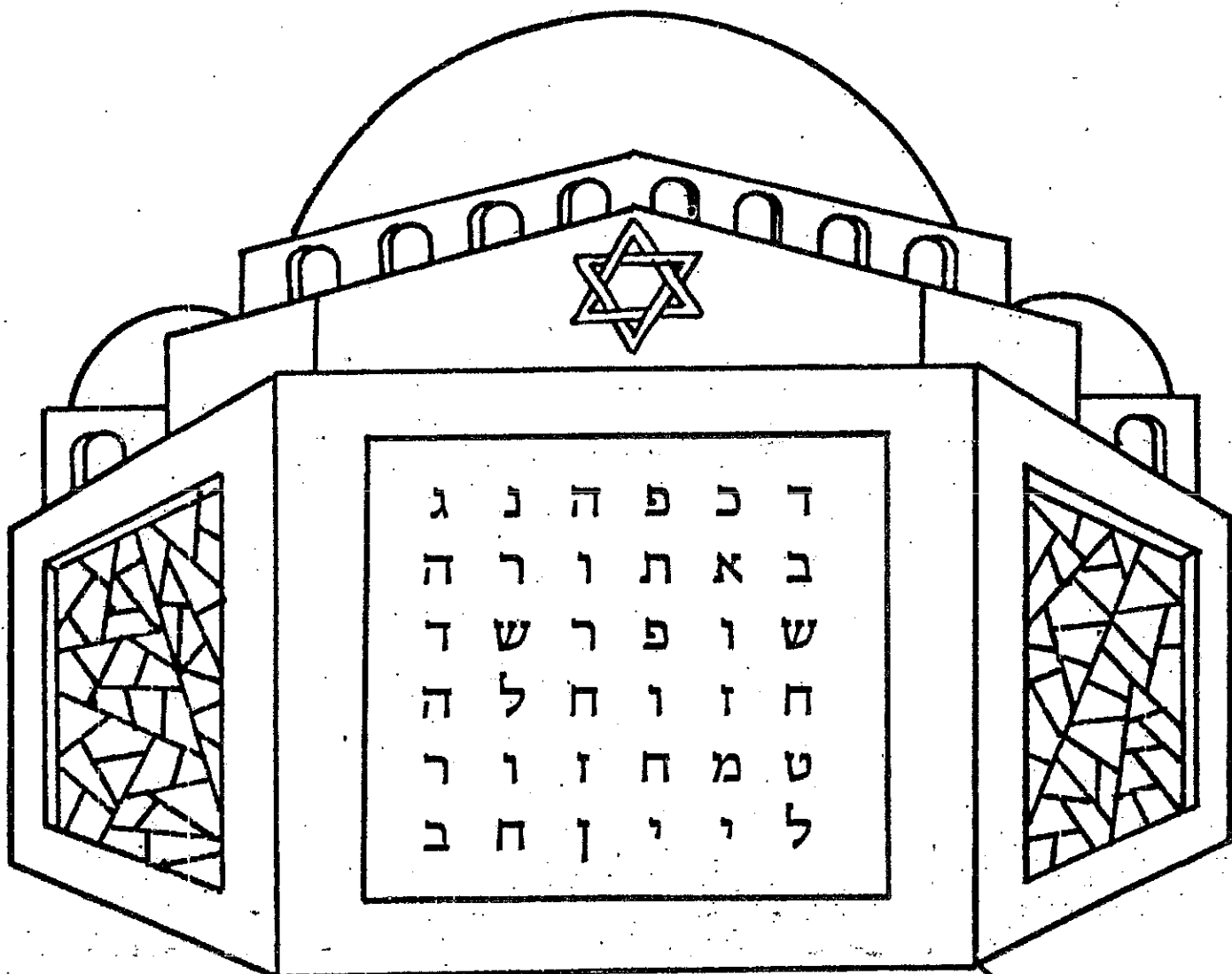
DOWN:

1. Rosh Hashanah comes in the Hebrew month of _____.
4. This holiday comes at the "head of the year;" the Hebrew word for "head" is _____.
5. We _____ when we go to the synagogue.
8. A Rosh Hashanah fruit is the _____.
10. Rosh Hashanah comes on day number _____ of the month.



ראש השנה בבית הכנסת

ROSH HASHANAH IN THE SYNAGOGUE



Look across and down and circle the

words that you find in the בית כנסת.

Can you find 12 Hebrew words for ראש השנה?

honey	דבש
shofar	שוֹפָר
apple	תפוח
Torah	תורה

Cantor	חזן
Mahzor	מחזור
hallah	חלה
kippah	כפה

Rabbi	רב
wine	יין
candle	נר
calendar	לוח