



MOSAIC

A PUBLICATION OF THE MONTREAL TORAH CENTER
BAIS MENACHEM CHABAD LUBAVITCH

HOLIDAY GUIDE



**SHANA TOVA!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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'ELUL' – THE MONTH OF COMPASSION

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 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 last 40 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.



What are the special 'Elul' Observances?

- The Shofar is sounded every week-day 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 1 through Sunday September 9, 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.

1 ROSH HASHANA

'YOM HADIN' – THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 9 THRU TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11

Rosh Hashana, which means 'Head of the Year', is the day on which G-d completed the creation of the world by creating Adam and Eve. Their very first act was to proclaim the Al-mighty as King of the Universe. They called upon all the 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, judging man and all creation, determining each individual's fate for the coming year.

What are the special Rosh Hashana foods and when are they eaten?

It is customary on Rosh Hashana to eat foods symbolizing sweetness, blessings and abundance.



At the first meal, on Sunday night, September 9, challah is dipped in honey. Afterwards we dip a piece of apple in honey and recite the following blessings:

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Haolam Borai Pree Ha-aitz. Yehee Ratzon Milfanecho She-te-chadesh Aleinu Shana Tova Um-tuka – ("May it be Your will to renew for us a good and sweet year".)

Other customs include eating the head of a fish (so that we be a 'head' and not a 'tail'), pomegranates (so that our merits be as numerous as the seeds) and carrots ('meren' in Yiddish, which means to multiply).

Second night of Rosh Hashana

- On the second night of Rosh Hashana, Monday September 10, it is customary to eat a 'new' fruit (i.e. a fruit that one has not partaken of this season) at the conclusion of the Kiddush. When reciting the blessing 'Shehecheyanu' in the Kiddush, we have in mind the new fruit over which 'Borei Pree Ha-aitz' is said.

ROSH HASHANA – CONT.

The Shofar

- G-d commands us in the Torah to sound the shofar on this day.
- The shofar proclaims the coronation of G-d as King of the Universe.
- It 'awakens' us to make amends and return to G-d.
- It reminds us of the shofar heard at Mount Sinai at the giving of the Torah.
- It represents the simple, primal outcry from the depth of the soul.
- It presages the call of the "Great Shofar" described by the Prophets, which heralds the advent of the Redemption.

What Is The Shofar?

The Shofar is made out of a kosher animal's horn. Any horn may be used, except the horn of a cow or a bull, for their horns would be a reminder of the Golden Calf which the children of Israel had made in the desert, coming out of Egypt. The common practice is to use a ram's horn, which recalls the readiness of our forefather Isaac to be sacrificed for G-d. At the last moment before Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac, G-d instructed him to offer a ram instead. Thus we recall and invoke Isaac's great merit. The Shofar is bent to show that we have to bow our hearts to G-d. It is kept simple, with no decorations.



When do we hear the Shofar this year?

This year the shofar is sounded Monday September 10 and Tuesday September 11.

The 'Tashlich' custom – What is it and when do we do it?

Tashlich prayers which 'cast away our sins' are recited by a body of water or pond containing live fish. 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.

Tashlich prayers are recited on the first day of Rosh Hashana, Monday September 10, following Mincha Services.



'Ten Days of Teshuvah – Return'

The first ten days of the month 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'.

The Fast of Gedaliah

Wednesday, September 12 is a fast day. The fast begins at 4:53 am and ends at 7:41 pm. It commemorates the assassination of Gedaliah, a great Jewish leader during the Babylonian exile, and the end of Jewish independence.

'Shabbat Shuvah' - Shabbat of Return / Repentance

From the evening of September 14 until nightfall of September 15 is called Shabbat Shuvah, so called after the Prophetic reading for that day: "Return (Shuvah), O Israel unto G-d Thy L-rd". Shabbat is a day of delight and celebration, thus this day imparts a sense of joy and pleasure in our 'Teshuvah'.

TESHUVAH

Teshuvah frequently translated as repentance, actually means returning. Judaism emphasizes that our essential nature – our soul – is pure, holy and innocent. True repentance is achieved not through harsh self-condemnation, but through the realization that our deepest desire is to do good.

Teshuvah means to return to self, to be aligned with our inner G-dly consciousness. Thus, since our soul is a 'part of G-d' Who is infinite, so too our 'return' to G-d has no limits. This means that even the most righteous can and ought to do 'Teshuva', and that 'Teshuva' is not merely to amend wrongdoings, but to deepen and improve our good habits and practices as well.

2 YOM KIPPUR

TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 18 – WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 19

Can Yom Kippur be a happy day?

Though these Days of Awe, as they are often called, are solemn, they are not sad. In fact, Yom Kippur is, in a subtle way, one of the happiest days of the year. For on Yom Kippur we receive what is perhaps G-d's most sublime gift; His forgiveness and the opportunity to deepen our relationship with Him.

When one person truly forgives another, it is because of a deep sense of friendship and love that overrides the effect of whatever wrong was done. Similarly, G-d's forgiveness is an expression of His eternal, unconditional love. Though we may have transgressed His will, our essence – our soul – remains G-dly, and pure. Yom Kippur is the one day each year when G-d reveals most clearly that our essence and His essence are one.

Moreover, on the level of the soul, the Jewish people are all truly equal and indivisible. The more fully we demonstrate our essential unity by acting with love and friendship amongst ourselves, the more fully G-d's love will be revealed to us.



The Eve of Yom Kippur Festive Meals

On the day preceding Yom Kippur, Tuesday September 18, we eat two festive meals, one during the day, the other just before the fast to demonstrate our faith and confidence in G-d's mercy.

Eating Kreplach

Many have the custom of eating kreplach (small pieces of ground meat enveloped in dough) in the meals before Yom Kippur. One reason for this custom is that the dark meat covered by the white dough symbolizes our sins becoming 'whitened' and cleansed.

Blessing the Children

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."

Please Forgive Me...

Yom Kippur atones for sins against G-d, but not for wrongdoing between man and man. It is therefore important, before Yom Kippur, to apologize and seek

forgiveness from friends, relatives, and acquaintances, to heal any ill feelings which may have arisen.

Five Prohibitions

On Yom Kippur 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)
- wearing leather shoes.

Yom Kippur Service Highlights:

During each main prayer throughout Yom Kippur, we recite the 'Viduy' (confession), enumerating all the sins we may have committed, and asking G-d's forgiveness.

Kol Nidrei

The evening service begins with the chanting of 'Kol Nidrei', recited three times by the chazzan. The origins of Kol Nidrei date back to the period of the Spanish Inquisition. Amongst many layers of meaning, it expresses the sentiment that at our core we are all pure, and we desire to be faithful to G-d and His commandments.

Morning Service

After the reading of the Torah, Yizkor, the memorial prayer for the deceased is recited.

Neilah

The final prayer of the day, as our judgement for the coming year is being sealed, is called 'Neilah'. Neilah is the only service of the entire year during which the doors of the Ark remain open from beginning to end. This signifies that the gates of prayer in Heaven are wide open to us at this time. Neilah culminates with the 'Shema Yisrael' and other verses said in unison which express the essence of our faith and the essence of our Jewishness. The Shofar is then sounded and Yom Kippur is concluded with the prayer 'Next Year may we be in Jerusalem!'

2 • YOM KIPPUR – CONT.

Jonah Swallowed By the Fish – A Yom Kippur Story

The Haftorah that is read on the afternoon of Yom Kippur tells the story of how G-d commanded the prophet Jonah to go to the city of Ninveh and warn the people there to repent lest G-d destroy their city.

Jonah did not want to fulfill this mission and ran away on a ship. G-d caused a terrible storm to occur and eventually the sailors threw Jonah off the ship – as the only way to make the storm abate. G-d caused a great fish to swallow up Jonah. Eventually Jonah was saved from the fish and went to do G-d's bidding in Ninveh. The people sincerely returned to G-d and were spared.

Beyond the obvious lesson about the power of repentance, the story contains another lesson as well. This lesson concerns the importance of loving our fellow Jew:

Jonah knew that if he went to Ninveh the people would heed his words and repent. He also knew that the Jewish people had not repented in spite of all the chastising the prophets had given them. Rather than make his fellow Jews appear bad in G-d's eyes, Jonah chose to 'run away' knowing that he would personally have to suffer the consequences...

3 SUKKOT – FESTIVAL OF BOOTHS

SEASON OF OUR REJOICING

SUNDAY EVENING SEPTEMBER 23 THRU TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2

FIRST DAYS YOM TOV (HOLY DAYS)

SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 23 THRU TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25

Why do we sit in a Sukkah?

Immediately following the awesome days of Rosh Hashana through Yom Kippur, we prepare for the joyous exuberance of Sukkot, the 'Season of our Rejoicing'. After leaving Egypt, during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness, the Jewish people were surrounded by protective 'clouds of glory'. In commemoration, and to enhance our awareness of G-d's all-embracing love and protection, we are commanded, "In Sukkahs (booths) you shall dwell, seven days" (Lev. 23:42).

Why is Sukkah such a unique Mitzvah?

Eating festive meals and spending time in the outdoor Sukkah is a delightful and unique experience. Some have the custom of decorating the Sukkah with elaborate ornaments; others prefer to preserve its unadorned simplicity. But whatever one's style, the Sukkah is the only Mitzvah in which we are completely surrounded, from head to toe, by the Mitzvah itself – enveloped, as it were, in the Divine presence.

When do we sit in the Sukkah?

From Sunday evening, September 23, through sundown on Monday October 1, all meals are eaten in the Sukkah. Up until Sunday evening, September 30 when partaking of a meal containing at least two ounces of bread or cake, we say the blessing 'Leyshev BaSukah' (see page 7, blessing #6).

Shake it up

Another special mitzvah of Sukkot is the shaking together of the 'Four Species' – the etrog (citron), lulav (palm branch), three haddasim (myrtle branches), and two aravot (willow branches). Each day of Sukkot (except the Sabbath) we shake the 'four kinds' during the daytime. We begin fulfilling the mitzvah of the 'Four Kinds' Monday, September 24 through Sunday, September 30 with the exception of Shabbat. During the Hallel prayer and the special prayer of Hoshanot the 'Four Kinds' are held.

Take the lulav (with haddasim and aravot attached) in the right hand, say the appropriate blessing(s). Then take the etrog in the left hand with the point, or pitom, up, (i.e. the stem is on the bottom) bring it together with the other three kinds, and shake them. See blessings on page 7. September 24 blessings 7 & 5. On subsequent days blessing 7.



YOUR HOLIDAY GUIDE



Why do we dance rather than study?

Why don't we celebrate Simchat Torah by learning Torah? Would it not be more appropriate to have learning sessions in order to celebrate the completion of reading the Torah? Yet the Torah is closed, tied up and covered with its mantle.

The reason is because the joy of Simchat Torah is far greater than any delight we may derive from intellectual understanding. By dancing with the Torah we demonstrate the fact that Torah is not merely profound and deep wisdom. The Torah is Divine and is therefore, in essence, beyond all understanding and reason. Indeed, at this level all Jews relate to the Torah equally, for we are different only in terms of our intellectual or emotional capacities. At our core we are all equal. On Simchas Torah we express that as we dance as one.

3 • SUKKOT – CONT.

United we stand

Each of the four kinds represents a different type of Jew. The fact that the mitzvah requires all four kinds symbolizes our oneness as a people: we all need one another. The four species are waved in all four directions, and up and down, signifying that G-d is everywhere.

INTERMEDIATE DAYS OF SUKKOT – CHOL HAMOED WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 26 THRU SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 30

Wednesday September 26 until Sunday September 30 are called Chol Hamoed – the intermediate days. Besides Shabbat (during which no manner of 'work' may be done) on the rest of Chol Hamoed, only necessary work should be done. Special prayers called hoshanot are said each morning (except Shabbat).

Throughout Sukkot (including Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah) tefillin are not worn. Throughout the seven days of the Festival, we continue our celebration in the Sukkah, in ever-increasing joy and happiness.

4 HOSHANA RABBA – THE GREAT SALVATION SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

The seventh day of Sukkot, Sunday, September 30, is called Hoshana Rabba. It is customary to stay awake the night before and recite the Book of Deuteronomy and the entire Book of Psalms. The six Hoshanot recited on all the previous days of Sukkot are said while circling the bimah. Then the special prayer for Hoshana Rabba is said and the Bimah is circled for a 7th time. In an ancient rite of profound mystical significance, five bound willow branches are beaten on the floor with a special prayer – symbolically 'sweetening' G-d's judgment. It is customary to eat a festive meal where the challah is dipped in honey and one of the dishes includes kreplach – a meat filled dumpling.

5 'SHEMINI ATZERET' AND 'SIMCHAT TORAH' LAST DAYS YOM TOV (HOLY DAYS) SUNDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 30 THRU TUESDAY, OCTOBER 2

The Height of Simcha

On the eve of Simchat Torah, Monday, October 1, and in many communities on the previous eve of Shemini Atzeret as well, we make seven 'hakafot' (circlings) around the Bimah, singing and dancing with the Torah scrolls.

On the morning of Simchat Torah, Tuesday, October 2, three and a half 'hakafot' are done around the Bimah. The final Torah portion is then read followed by the reading of the first section of Bereshis – the beginning of the Torah once again.

The festival of Sukkot and especially Simchat Torah is the opportunity to 'bring down' simcha – joy and happiness into our lives for the whole year to come. The greater the joy and celebration that we experience and generate during this time, the greater our joy for the year to come.

More Festive Meals...

On the eighth day of Sukkot, Monday, October 1, which is Shemini Atzeret, we continue to eat meals in the Sukkah, but without reciting the blessing 'Leyshev BaSukah'. We resume eating meals indoors from Monday night, October 1.



CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES AND BLESSINGS

DATE	TIME
Sunday Sept 9 - <i>Elul 29</i> <i>Erev Rosh Hashana</i>	Light candles**, blessings 1 & 5 6:59 pm Eat special Rosh Hashana foods (see page 2)
Monday Sept 10 - <i>Tishrei 1</i> <i>Rosh Hashana</i>	Hear the shofar Tashlich prayers after Mincha Light candles***, blessings 1 & 5 after 8:00 pm Eat new fruit, blessing 8
Tuesday Sept 11 - <i>Tishrei 2</i> <i>Rosh Hashana</i>	Hear the shofar Yom Tov ends 7:58 pm
Wednesday Sept 12 - <i>Tishrei 3</i> <i>Fast of Gedaliah</i>	Fast begins 4:53 am Fast ends 7:41 pm
Friday Sept 14 - <i>Tishrei 5</i> <i>Erev Shabbat Shuva</i>	Light candles*, blessing 2 6:49 pm
Saturday Sept 15 - <i>Tishrei 6</i> <i>Shabbat Shuva</i>	Shabbat ends 7:50 pm
Tuesday Sept 18 - <i>Tishrei 9</i> <i>Erev Yom Kippur</i>	Festive Meals Light candles*, blessings 3 & 5, fast begins 6:42 pm
Wednesday Sept 19 - <i>Tishrei 10</i> <i>Yom Kippur</i>	Yizkor Memorial prayers Fast ends 7:42 pm
Friday Sept 21 - <i>Tishrei 12</i> <i>Erev Shabbat</i>	Light candles*, blessing 2 6:36 pm
Saturday Sept 22 - <i>Tishrei 13</i> <i>Shabbat</i>	Shabbat ends 7:36 pm
Sunday Sept 23 - <i>Tishrei 14</i> <i>Erev Sukkot</i>	Light candles**, blessings 4 & 5 6:32 pm Recite blessing 6 at all meals in the Sukkah, from now until Shmini Atzeret, Sunday evening Sept 30.
Monday Sept 24 - <i>Tishrei 15</i> <i>Sukkot</i>	Shake the 'Four Kinds', blessings 7 & 5 (On subsequent days only blessing 7) Light candles***, blessings 4 & 5 after 7:32 pm
Tuesday Sept 25 - <i>Tishrei 16</i> <i>Sukkot</i>	Yom Tov ends 7:30 pm
Friday Sept 28 - <i>Tishrei 19</i> <i>Erev Shabbat Chol Hamoed</i>	Light candles*, blessing 2 6:23 pm
Saturday Sept 29 - <i>Tishrei 20</i> <i>Shabbat Chol Hamoed</i>	Shabbat ends 7:22 pm
Sunday Sept 30 - <i>Tishrei 21</i> <i>Hoshana Rabba</i> <i>Erev Shemini Atzeret</i>	Light candles**, blessing 4 & 5 6:18 pm (In some communities – Hakafot/Dancing with the Torah)
Monday Oct 1 - <i>Tishrei 22</i> <i>Shemini Atzeret</i> <i>Erev Simchat Torah</i>	Yizkor Memorial prayers Light candles***, blessings 4 & 5 after 7:19 pm Hakafot/Dancing with the Torah
Tuesday Oct 2 - <i>Tishrei 23</i> <i>Simchat Torah</i>	Hakafot/Dancing with the Torah Yom Tov ends 7:17 pm
Friday Oct 5 - <i>Tishrei 26</i> <i>Erev Shabbat Bereshit</i>	Light candles*, blessing 2 6:09 pm
Saturday Oct 6 - <i>Tishrei 27</i> <i>Shabbat Bereshit</i>	Blessing of the new month of Cheshvan • Shabbat ends 7:09 pm



BLESSINGS

- 1 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Asher Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Lehadlik Ner Shel
Yom Hazikaron.
- 2 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Asher Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Lehadlik Ner Shel
Shabbat Kodesh.
- 3 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Asher Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Lehadlik Ner Shel
Yom Hakipurim.
- 4 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam Asher
Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Lehadlik Ner
Shel Yom Tov.
- 5 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
She-heh-cheh-yanu
Ve-key-manu Ve-hee-geeyanu
Lizman Hazeh.
- 6 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Asher Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Ley-shev Ba-su-kah.
- 7 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Asher Kiddishanu Bemitzvotav
Vetzivanu Al Ne-ti-lat Lulav.
- 8 Baruch Atah A-donai
El-oheinu Melech Haolam
Borai Pree Ha-etz.

* Do not light after sunset.

** If lighting after sunset, light only from a pre-existing flame.

*** Light only from a pre-existing flame.

A pre-existing flame can be a pilot light in a gas stove or a 25 hour candle lit before the onset of the festival.

CARAMELIZED APPLES

Caramelized apples are a great addition to desserts such as pastry, pies, cakes and served hot over ice cream. They also work well over savory dishes like chicken and turkey roast.



INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp unsalted butter or margarine
- 3 tbsp brown sugar
- 2 large firm apples*
pinch of cinnamon
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- 1 tbsp apple juice or water

DIRECTIONS

Core apples and peel if desired. Slice into 1/4" wedges. Melt butter and sugar over low-medium heat until sugar dissolves and mixture is bubbly, about 1 minute. Add apples and lemon juice and cook over medium heat for approximately 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Add in the cinnamon. Mix the cornstarch with the apple juice or water and add to the pot. Continue cooking until the liquid thickens.

* Be sure to use firm apples such as Braeburn, Honeycrisp, Pink Lady, Fuji or Gala. Softer apples will fall apart during cooking.

SALMON EN CROUTE WITH CREAMED LEEKS

INGREDIENTS

- 4 slices center-cut salmon fillet, skin off
- 2 tbsp honey
salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 large leek, or two medium,
sliced into half rings
- 2 tbsp refined coconut oil*
- 1/4 cup coconut milk*
- 4 puff pastry squares, or 1 sheet
cut into 4 squares
- 1 egg + 1 tbsp water, beaten
sesame seeds

Yields: 4 servings

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 400°. Heat the coconut oil over medium heat and add the leeks. Sauté until wilted and starting to brown and caramelize. Add the coconut milk and season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Simmer until creamy.

Season the salmon with salt and pepper and drizzle with honey. Spread leeks over the salmon and wrap in puff pastry, seam-side down. Brush the puff pastry with eggwash and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Cut a few diagonal slits in the pastry, taking care not to slice through the salmon. Bake for 20 minutes.

Serve warm over mixed greens** with pomegranate seeds, shaved beets (Chioggia beets pictured) and a light dressing of oil, lemon (or orange) juice, salt and pepper.

* If you are sensitive to the flavor of coconut, you may use olive oil or trans fat free margarine in place of the oil and almond milk (or nondairy milk of your choice) in place of the coconut milk. Alternatively, you may leave out the milk for a less creamy texture.

** Feel free to add carrots, apples or any other symbolic holiday foods to the salad.

