

## SHABBAT SHALOM FROM CYBERSPACE

Rosh Hashana and Haazinu  
September 5-7 2013 - 1-3 Tishrei 5774

**DEDICATIONS:** In memory of Victor Azrak – Haim Ben Sarina 7 Tishrei  
And of my Grandfather David Gindi HaKohen 9 Tishrei  
Mikhayla – Sorry I missed your birthday last week. And Ruby Happy birthday this week.

Herman Rebecca are sponsoring the Kiddush the Shabbat for The health and prosperity of the Congregation

**ROSH HASHANA**  
We have baby sitting Thursday and Friday  
10:30AM to 1:30 PM

**SEE HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

**WEEKDAY TORAH CLASS SCHEDULE**  
Monday Night Class with Rabbi Yenay at 7PM – Arbit Follow

**SAVE THE DATE**  
Build the Sukkah, this Sunday Spetmeber 8<sup>th</sup> after services – we need you for ann hour or two  
Pizza in the Hut. Sunday after Yom Kippur.- **SEPTEMBER 15**  
11 to 1 pm Come decorate the Sukkah, music, Arst & Crafts, friends, pizza and fun.

**Long Beach Discovery Seminar - Sunday, October 3rd - 12:45 - 5:30 at the Long Beach Hotel**  
More than 200,000 people have enjoyed a Discovery Seminar over the last 20 years all over the world. What is a Discovery Seminar? Based on analytical techniques used by the Mossad (the Israeli CIA), fascinating interactive discussions ensue challenging audiences to judge whether the Bible was written by people, or by a power "beyond time and space." Educational, entertaining and intellectually stimulating. We look forward to seeing you there! Please see attached flyer for details. Sponsored by The Sephardic Congregation of Long Beach and the BACH Jewish Center.

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Daily Minyan Mon – Thurs at 979 Third Avenue, 17th Floor,  
Artistic Frame at 4PM – Please join us! 212-289-2100

Dear Friends,

As we end the year today and begin the year again tonight, we reflect on the times passed and the times to come. Some of you have shared our lives for many of the eighteen years this newsletter has gone out each (or at least most) weeks and some of you have just joined us. We we want to wish each of you Shannah Tovah UMetukah, a good year that is sweet. We pray that we all have a year of health and happiness, peace and prosperity. May G-d inscribe you and your family

in the book of life. May we all have the merit to live and see the Mashiach Bimherah Beyameynu. Amen

If you know anyone that would like to receive the newsletter, let us know and we'll add them. And if your inbox is becoming overwhelming and you prefer not to receive the newsletter anymore please let us know and we will remove you from the list. Please continue to write. I enjoy your comments and suggestions even when you don't agree with me.

On behalf of Chantelle and our entire family and our Synagogue, we wish everyone in Cyberspace a happy holiday and a wonderful year together with your families.

Shanah Tovah and Ketivah Va'Hatimah Tovah!  
Tizku Le'Shanim Rabot Ne'imot Ve'Tovot!!!

Chantelle has a friend Dianne, in Minneapolis with two children suffering from RSD - Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy. Dianne has read everything she can on the subject, but I know our newsletter often reaches people involved in research. If any of you can offer

**HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE 5774 – Changes in Red**

**Wednesday September 4, 2013**

**Ereb Rosh Hashana.**

**Selihot 6:15 AM - Shahrit and Hatara 7:00 AM**

**Erub Tabshilin – To be done at home prior to Candle Lighting**

**Candle Lighting 7:04 PM - Minha and Arbit 7:00 PM**

**Thursday September 5th – First Day Rosh Hashana**

**Vatikin Myan 5:30AM – Sunrise 6:25:36 – Shofar apx 7:30 AM**

**Shahrit 8:30 AM – Torah apx 10:00 and Shofar apx 11:00 AM**

**Minha followed by Tashlich 6:00 PM**

**Candle Lighting AFTER 7:56PM**

**Friday September 6th – Second Day Rosh Hashana**

**Vatikin Myan 5:30AM – Sunrise 6:26:34 – Shofar apx 7:30 AM**

**Shahrit 8:30 AM – Torah apx 10:00 and Shofar apx 11:00 AM**

**Minha 7:00 PM followed by Kabbalat Shabbat and Arbit**

**Candle Lighting 7:01 PM – Please note the last schedule was wrong**

**Saturday September 6th – Shabbat Teshuba Perasha “Ha’Azinu”**

**Shahrit 9:00 AM**

**Minha 6:15 followed by Seudah Shelishi and a class**

**Arbit 7:50 – Havdalah and Shabbat Ends at 8:00**

**“Hatara”- the nullifying of one’s vows and oaths for the past year will be recited after Arbit.**

**All men and women are urged to attend at 8:10**

**ASERET YEMEY TESHUBAH**

**Sunday September 7th – Fast of Gedalyah**

**Fast Begins 5:11 AM**

**Selihot 7:00 AM - Shahrit 8:00 AM**

**Minha with Sefer Torah 6:45 PM**

**Arbit 7:20 PM - Fast ends 7:40 PM**

**DAILY**

**Selihot 6:00 AM Shahrit 7:00**

**YOM KIPPUR**

**Friday September 13 – Ereb Yom Kippur**

**Selihot 6:00 AM / Shahrit 7:00 AM**

**Minha (with Tefillin) 2:00 PM**

**Yom Kippur Candle Lighting 6:49 PM**

**Fast Begins 6:49 PM - Kal Nidre Services followed by Arbit 6:55 PM**

**Saturday September 14 – Yom Kippur**

**Shahrit 8:00 AM / Musaf 12:30 PM / Minha 4:15 PM**

**Ne’ilah Services 6:15 PM / Arbit 7:40 PM**

**Prayer Times are approximate and may change**

**Fast Ends - Habdala 7:48 PM**

**Birkat Halebana – Blessing on the Moon**

## ROSH HASHANA HONORS TO PURCHASE AS OF WEDNESDAY August 28, 2013

The items in red are still available for purchase.

### Rosh Hashana Eve

Parnasa of Eve of Rosh Hashana Day – The prayer for financial success - Mizrahi Family for Shaya Abittan

### 1<sup>st</sup> Day Rosh Hashana

Opening the Ark on Rosh Hashana – Mizrahi Family for Abie Abittan

Carrying The Torah Yusupov Family for Bobby Mizrahi

Carrying The Second Torah Barbara Halio for Shaya Abittan

Carry the Haftara Case Yusupov Family for Mathew Mizrahi

Rimonim for all the Torah's Bibi Family for Ari Waldman And for Ely Altarac to join him from Rose Pappo Allen for The Pappo Family, Santo, Eny & Renee in memory of her dad who was a devoted member of the Sephardic Congregation for so many years

Raise the Torah Hagbah Lemberger Family for Sam Shetrit

Gelila Wrap the Torah Lemberger Family for Yehudah Shetrit

Mashlim with Kaddish said in memory of a loved one Leon Sutton

Haftara with Kaddish Mizrahi Family for Chaim Abittan

Parnasa of Rosh Hashana Day Yusupov Family

Parnasa of Rosh Hashana Mincha Mizrahi Family for Sam Shetrit

Parnasa of Rosh Hashana evening service Bibi Family for Bobby Mizrahi

### 2nd Day Rosh Hashana

Opening the Ark on Rosh Hashana – Soleymanzadeh Family

Carrying The Torah Yusupov Family for Hal Waldman

Carrying The Second Torah Mizrahi Family for Yosef Kahn and Moses Bibi

Carry the Haftara Case Ely Altarac for Ari Waldman

Rimonim for all the Torah's Lobell Family for Josh

Raise the Torah Hagbah Yusupov Family for Robert Yadgarov

Gelila Wrap the Torah Lobell Family for Danny Lobell

Mashlim with Kaddish said in memory of a loved one \$ 1500 not sold

Haftara with Kaddish said in memory of a loved one \$ 1800 not sold

Parnasa of Rosh Hashana Day – The prayer for financial success \$2600 not sold

Parnasa of Rosh Hashana Mincha – The prayer for financial success Mizrahi Family for Sam Yusupov

## Yom Kippur – Selected Honors

### Yom Kippur Eve

Open the Ark for Kal Nidre – Mizrahi Family for Meyer Abittan

Sefer Kal Nidre - Azizo Family for Rabbi David Bibi to hold for them

Each of the additional Torahs brought out with Sefer Kal Nidre 4-12 @ \$ 1500 ea

2. The Waldmans for Bobby Mizrahi

3. The Waldmans for Albert Yusupov

All the Rimonim for all the Torahs \$ 1500

Parnasa of evening service –LEON SUTTON

### Yom Kippur Day

Opening the Ark on Yom Kippur - Soleymanzadeh Family

Carrying The Torah Yusupov Family for Sam Shetrit

Carrying The Second Torah Bibi Family for Moses Bibi

Carry the Haftara Case Ely Altarac for Ari Waldman

Rimonim for all the Torah's Ernie Davidson

Raise the Torah Hagbah Bibi Family for Albert Yusupov

Gelila Wrap the Torah Lobell Family for Yoni Lobell

Mashlim with Kaddish said in memory of a loved one - Bobby Mizrahi in memory of his dad and of Hindys brother.

Haftara Yom Kippur Day Bibi Family for Rabbi Yosef Colish

Parnasa Yom Kippur 2600 not sold

### Yom Kippur Mincha

Opening the Ark Mincha on Yom Kippur - Soleymanzadeh Family for Meyer Abittan

Carrying The Torah Barbara Halio for Shaya

Carry the Haftara Case Mizrahi Family for Moshe Shetrit

Rimonim for the Torah and Haftara Case's Kathy Amiel for Nissim (Barry) Pinto

Raise the Torah Hagbah Lobell Family for Sammy Lobell

Gelila Wrap the Torah Lobell Family for Richard Lobell

Maftir Yona Yusupov Family for Sam Yusupov

Parnasa Yom Kippur Mincha Soleymanzadeh Family

Opening Ark Neila – Mizrahi Family for the tennis gang.

# SELECTED CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS FOR ROSH HASHANAH 5774 - 2013

## **ERUB TABSHILIN**

Our sages instituted Erub Tabshilin as a means to enable us to prepare food on the Friday of the Holiday for Shabbat. This year the holidays are followed immediately by Shabbat and Erub Tabshilin is applicable. On Wednesday afternoon, set aside a piece of bread and cooked food intended for Shabbat (i.e. a hard-boiled egg). Raise it and recite the following:

*“Barukh Ata A-nay Elo-kenu Melekh Ha’olam Asher Kideshanu Bemisvotav Vessivanu Al Misvat Erub.”*

*“In accordance with the Law of Erub, it shall be permissible for us to bake, cook, prepare and do all necessary things for Shabbat during Yom Tob (the holiday).”*

Be sure to eat the bread and food by “Seuda Shelishit” on Shabbat.

## **Candle Lighting**

The blessing for candle lighting for both nights of Rosh HaShanah:

*“Barukh Ata A-nay Elo-kenu Melekh Haolam Asher Kideshanu Bemisvotav Vessivanu Lehadlik Ner Shel Yom Tob.”*

## **Kiddush**

A regular Rosh HaShanah Kiddush is recited on both nights of Rosh HaShanah.

The blessing of “*Shehechyanu*” is recited on both nights.

## *Seder for Rosh HaShanah Both Nights:*

After Kiddush and the blessing on the bread, it is our custom to precede the family meal with special foods chosen symbolically and eaten with appropriate blessings and wishes suggested by their names. Recite the prayer and the blessing before eating the following:

### **Apple dipped in sugar or honey**

May it be Thy will Oh L-rd to grant us a year from the first day to the last, goodly as the apple and sweet as honey.

*“Barukh Ata A---nay Elo-kenu Melekh Haolam Boreh Peri Ha’ess.”*

### **Banana ( Its mainly to say the Adamah blessing to eliminate a possible need on the other foods)**

May it be Thy will...that we never slip on life’s banana peels ( David Frieden at our Tuesday night class)

*“Barukh Ata A---nay Elo-kenu Melekh Haolam Boreh Peri Ha’adama.”*

### **Leek**

May it be Thy will...that all our enemies and those who hate us be eliminated.

### **Swiss Chard**

May it be Thy will...that those who have beaten us or sought harm shall be beaten in the coming year.

**Dates**

May it be Thy will...that all our enemies and those that hate us be neutralized and non-existent.

**Squash, gourd, or pumpkin**

May it be Thy will...to consider our good deeds and guard us from enemies that gird at us.

**Pomegranate**

May it be Thy will...that we will be rich and replete with acts inspired by religion and piety as this pomegranate is rich and replete with seeds.

**Frijoles, lubia, or fasoolia beans**

May it be Thy will...that we will be rich and replete with acts inspired by religion and piety as these beans are rich and numerous.

**Sheep's head, Fish head, cow brains, or the like**

**( You might try the heads of Swedish fish or a "head" of lettuce for the vegans)**

May it be Thy will...that we may go ahead in all we undertake and be the first for good deeds.

## OBSERVANCE OF ROSH HASHANAH

Both days of Rosh HaShanah are observed in a similar way to Shabbat with the exception of cooking and carrying. One may not work, write, or sell, buy or ride in a car, but one can cook (transfer fire from an existing flame or pilot to another) and one may carry outside (even without an Erub) keys, talit, baby carriage, etc. One may not strike a match to start a fire even for the purpose of cooking. We suggest the use of the pilot light or a candle left burning from before the holiday. You may use the candles that were lit for the holiday.

**Tekiat Shofar:**

The Shofar is sounded on both days of Rosh HaShanah this year. The Shofar is sounded during the morning services. Make sure that you arrive on time since the Missva (commandment) of listening to the Shofar is of the utmost importance. Although women are not obligated from the Torah to listen to the sound of the Shofar, generations of women have taken it upon themselves to fulfill this commandment. We call upon all the women to come early enough to be able to participate and fulfill the Missva of Shofar.

**Som Gedalyah:**

The Fast of Gedalyah begins with the break of dawn **5:13 AM** on **Sunday, September 8, 2013** and ends at **7:36 PM**.

**Prayers on the Ten Days of Penitence:**

Beginning on Rosh HaShanah, we add certain verses and paragraphs to the prayers relating to the 10 days of Penitence. These prayers are found in every siddur. Do not forget to recite "Shir Hama'alot" before "Yosser". In the Amida recite "Zokhrenu Le'haim", "Me Khamokha", "Hamelekh Hakadosh", "Ukhtob Le'haim Tobim", and "Ubsefer Haim". These additions remain in effect through Yom Kippur.

any advice or assistance, please let me know and I'll put you in touch.

### **Omens and Attitudes.**

My daughter Mikhayla, my own master chef who turned 20 last week ( Happy Birthday Mikhayla), asked me to go to Amazing Savings for some things she needed. She was preparing for Rosh Hashana with Chantelle. While in the store I noticed two yeshiva boys in their suits and white shirts with their mom. The mother pulled a set of small bowls and one boy asked why they would need such small bowls. The mother responded that they would be good for the simanim - the special foods we serve on the night of Rosh Hashana. The other boy laughed and asked, "Ma, what do you think? That this is Pesach? Ma, its not the Seder! Why such a big deal over some foods that we don't want to eat anyway? Do you really think it matters?"

I couldn't mind my own business. The mother was a bit aggravated. She went one way and the boys went the other way. So I went over to speak with them.

The truth is that their question is very valid. Just imagine for a second getting a speeding ticket in some small town in upstate New York or New Jersey. You arrive at this small town court. The cop who wrote you the ticket is there and the judge asks you how you plead. You try some guilty with explanation excuse and then the judge cuts you short, asks the cop a few questions and tells you if you're done he will decide the verdict. You tell him to wait one more minute. You pull out from your bag a jar of honey and some sliced apple and as you dip the apple into the honey you state aloud, may it be the will of your honor the judge to sweeten my verdict just like this honey sweetens the apple and you eat the apple, relishing each bite in front of the court.

Odds are that the judge will either throw you into a cell for a few hours charging you with contempt or ask that you be taken to the local hospital for observation.

Rosh Hashana is supposed to be the day of judgment. And as we learned in school as children, G-d takes out the scale. On one side go our sins and on the other go our merits. If we are worthy, we are judged positively and if not then we're in for some trouble.

How can eating a pomegranate or some blacked eyed peas increase our merits? How can eating a gourd or some dates help destroy our enemies? How can an apple in honey sweeten out judgments? How

is it possible through these foods to change sins into merits? What's going on here?

Is there such a thing as a good omen? And on Rosh Hashana is it the food or the prayer? And if it's the prayer then why do we need the food?

The Talmud tells us about omens. If someone wants to know if they will be judged for life then on the days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur he should light a candle in a draft free room. If the candles burns then fine, if the candle goes out, he better get some more life insurance quickly.

If he wants to know if he will merit a good parnasa or livelihood, he should take a chicken. He should feed it and if after a while it gains weight than all is good. But if it loses weight, he should get on the phone and call the bankruptcy attorney because tough times are ahead. And there are more.

The Talmud then warns not to try any of these at home. "Perhaps he will not see it and worry and as a result he will experience misfortune".

Then Abaye goes on to say that what does work is eating pumpkin, fenugreek, leeks, beets and dates. These are good omens. He doesn't mention any yehi ratzons, nor prayers. Eat those foods he suggests. And if you were confused when we started, you should be even more puzzled now. How can we begin to understand what is going on here?

The Arizal suggests that the person who lit the candle and sees the candle go out goes into depression. Perhaps the "satan" blew it out just to mess with your mind. Sadness is a tool of the other side as it disconnects us from Hashem. Recall our forefather Jacob who in mourning for the loss of Jacob for 22 years lost his Ruach HaKodesh – his connection with G-d. Abaye in his brilliance suggests that if depression can disconnect us and damage our Mazal then joy can do the opposite. And these special foods should bring us joy.

Last week we read of 98 chilling curses. Why are we subject to curses? The Torah tells us it's because we didn't serve Hashem with joy and a good heart. We are commanded again and again to be happy and to serve Hashem with joy.

These foods which make up the simanim of Rosh Hashana can be sweet but sometimes sour. If we taste them and appreciate them; If we taste the sweetness and forget the tart; If we are thankful of the world G-d gave us and happy with Hashem then Hashem is happy with us. If we are satisfied and

happy then there is no place for sadness, anger or jealousy. Satisfaction and joy have the power to change us and change our lives.

If we are happy with Hashem and look at him as a father then Hashem will look at us as his children. A child who does something wrong and comes to his parent admitting his sin, feeling bad not only for doing something wrong but for embarrassing his parent and truly tries to never do the same wrong again in essence converts the sin into a merit. The father cherishes the child and the entire act becomes part of a victory tale.

On Rosh Hashana, Hashem's behavior towards us mirrors our own behavior. If we are happy with the world and satisfied; If we share and care; If we look towards G-d as a parent, then he looks at us as a child.

Eating those foods, appreciating them, being satisfied with them and enjoying them really has the power to change our Mazal. We really can turn a sin into a merit. They have the power to change the scale by literally converting the sins on the left side of the scale into merits on the right side.

The key lies in our own hands. The key lies in our own attitudes. On this Rosh Hashana as you sit with your family and taste these foods stop and smell the proverbial roses. Go around the table and ask everyone to focus on what they have to be thankful for. Focus on the glass half full. Commit to being satisfied and fighting jealousy and anger.

Don't forget that what we project finds its way back to us. May we project love and unity, satisfaction and appreciation, and may we be blessed with a year of health, happiness, peace and prosperity. Amen!

Tizku LeShanim Rabot,

Rabbi David Bibi

### **Forwarded from Young Morris Shama**

A group of alumni, highly established in their careers, got together to visit their old university professor. Conversation soon turned into complaints about stress in work and life.

Offering his guests coffee, the professor went to the kitchen and returned with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups – porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite – telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all the students had a cup of coffee in hand, the professor said: "If you noticed, all the nice looking expensive cups have been taken up, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress.

Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups... And then you began eyeing each others cups.

Now consider this: Life is the coffee; the jobs, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain Life, and the type of cup we have does not define, nor change the quality of life we live.

Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee. Savor the coffee, not the cups! The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything.

### **Summary of The Weekly Torah Reading: HaAzinu**

1st Aliya: Moshe begins by describing the presence of Hashem in nature as being as evident as the rain or dew that nourish the fields and gardens. G-d is entirely just, always good, always compassionate and forgiving. Therefore, all destruction and negativity must be ascribed directly to the ill fated decisions and actions of His children.

2nd Aliya: The Jew must always remember that he was chosen from among all other nations to be nurtured by the direct ministrations of the Creator. We were born in a "desolate, howling, wasteland" and protected till we were able to assume responsibility for our unique relationship with the Creator of heaven and earth.

3rd Aliya: Unfortunately, humankind's tendency is to forget the degree of their dependency upon Hashem and to create the illusion of self sufficiency and independence. "Yeshurun thus became fat and rebelled..."

4th Aliya: We will then be punished with exile and persecution. Chased from our land and sold into slavery, the Chosen People will experience what it means to be independent of Hashem's direct protection and benevolence.



5th Aliya: However, the other nations will fail in the very same manner that we did. They will assume that their ability to enslave the Chosen People and ravage Israel is proof of G-d's impotence and their own prowess and strength. Therefore, they will be punished and destroyed and the Chosen People will again recognize Hashem's primacy and control.

6th Aliya: Moshe's song ends with the Jewish people singing forth their acceptance and understanding of divine purpose and justice.

7th Aliya: Moshe presents the entire "song" to the nation and reemphasizes that the condition for keeping the Land is adherence to Torah and serving Hashem.

Hoshea 14:2-10; Yoel 2:11-27; Micha 7:18-20 - This Shabbos is known as Shabbos Shuva - the Shabbos of Return because the Haftorah begins with the words, "Shuva (Return) Yisroel to G-d" Gleaned from both Hoshea and Yoel, the prophets describe G-d's desire to forgive His children, if only they will repent. The fast of Yom Kippur is mentioned as well as the rewards awaiting us if we proclaim G-d in our midst.

Preparing For Yom Kippur - Review and Comment

The holiest day of the year is devoted to prayer and introspection. Although similar to Tisha B'Av as regards the restrictions against: eating, drinking, washing, using ointments, marital relations, and wearing leather shoes; the mood of Yom Kippur is totally different. Tisha B'Av is a sad day steeped in the memories of past tragedies and calamities. Yom Kippur is a solemn day, filled with the hope for forgiveness and the elation of a renewed relationship with both G-d and man.

Yom Kippur is the only biblically ordained fast day, and its origins began in the year 2248 after the Exodus from Mitzrayim. Following the breaking of the first Luchos, Moshe re-ascended Sinai in anticipation of the second Luchos. After 40 days and nights, during which the Bnai Yisroel immersed themselves in prayer and repentance for the sin of the Golden Calf, Moshe descended from Sinai on the 10th day of Tishrei bringing the 2nd Luchos and G-d's love and forgiveness. Thereafter, the day of Yom Kippur has been designated, by the Torah, as the day on which G-d forgives his children for their yearly sins of "worshipping the Golden Calf". Allow me to explain.

The sin of the Golden Calf captured the essence of why we sin. Following the extraordinary events leading up to Revelation, it is difficult to understand how that generation sinned so quickly and severely.

In truth, our generation isn't any different. Acceptance of a Creator who is intimately involved in directing every aspect of our personal, national, and universal destinies, carries the responsibility of listening to His commandments. To do any less is to deny the purpose that the Creator had in creating us and placing us in the setting of His universe.

Coming to terms with the awesomeness of G-d's power and control is not easy. Often we do not understand the rules by which He governs and judges, and more often, we aren't prepared to frame our lives by the restrictions of His demands. Instead, we either engage in the philosophical game of "is there a Creator who truly cares?" Or, we modify G-d in a form that we are more comfortable with, because we can then control the rules of the game. The Jews in the year 2448 knew that G-d existed, but didn't understand the degree of G-d's love and concern. As a result, they were unwilling to invest in a relationship that demanded complete obedience. To make such an investment requires absolute trust that G-d will continue to care and provide, even if His trusted servant Moshe was no longer present.

Today, we too aren't sure if we can trust G-d. If we could, it would be foolish not to listen to G-d's rules and demands considering the promised rewards of health, wealth, and all good things. Instead, we create our own image of G-d, our own Golden Calf that reflects the lack of trust and obedience in our relationship with the Creator. Some may feel that they have good cause to question His trustworthiness, others may admit that they simply aren't prepared to do what He demands. In either case, we are implored on Yom Kippur to forego our limited understanding, and through fasting and prayer rise above the physical limitations of our mortality to recognize the greater picture of G-d's continued and trustworthy providence. The mere fact that we have survived the past 3,000 years as a nation is a far greater miraculous revelation of G-d's presence than the Exodus or the giving of the Torah. Those were mere moments in history; the existence of the Jewish people is history itself. Yom Kippur should focus us on the need to trust G-d, and accept His continued involvement in our lives.

The entire Musaf service is devoted to what had taken place in the Bais Hamikdash. The Kohen Gadol performed the entire service in the hope of exacting forgiveness from G-d for the ongoing presence of the sin of the Golden Calf. He entered into the Holy of Holies to offer the nation's total acceptance of G-d and His Torah and to beg for compassion and mercy. During that time he was prohibited from wearing his "golden vestments", because they were reminiscent

of the Golden Calf. The very creation of the Mishkan-Tabernacle was because of the Golden Calf. The Mishkan was actually a microcosm of the creation of heaven and earth which is why the 39 Melachot - acts of work prohibited on Shabbos, are derived from the work required to build the Mishkan. Just as G-d rested in Shabbos from creation, so too, we rest from doing the work of creating the Mishkan. On Yom Kippur, the quintessential Shabbos, all the elements of our intended relationship with G-d come together. The holiest man on the holiest day in the holiest place comes as a representative of the holiest people to express absolute trust in the Creator and in His purpose for creating the universe and us.

The final moments of Yom Kippur underscore this concept. After davening and fasting almost 24 hours, we are prepared to embrace the realities of a Creator who is intimately involved in all aspects of our lives. This is publicly expressed when we all proclaim the final words, "G-d is our G-d!" The seven-fold proclamation is our statement of absolute trust and acceptance in G-d. This is followed by the joyous prayer, "Next year in Yerushalayim," when we will hopefully witness, first hand, the holiest man, serving on the holiest day, in the holiest of all places

**RABBI ELI MANSOUR**  
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**[MishnaBerura.com](http://MishnaBerura.com), [LearnTorah.com](http://LearnTorah.com)**

Rosh Hashana- Our False Sense of Security  
 There is a custom among Ashkenazim (and perhaps among some Sepharadim, as well, though our community does not have such a custom) to recite during the Musaf service on Rosh Hashanah a special prayer called U'netaneh Tokef. Many regard this prayer as the highlight of the Rosh Hashanah service, the most emotional and gut-wrenching moments of prayer.

This prayer lays out in very clear and explicit terms what precisely is happening on this day of Rosh Hashanah:

"On Rosh Hashanah it will be written, and on the fast of Yom Kippur it will be sealed – how many will pass [from the world], and how many will be created; who will live, and who will die; who is at his end, and who is not at his end; who by water, and who by fire; who by the sword, and who by wild beasts; who by hunger, and who by thirst; who by earthquake, and who by plague; who by strangulation, and who by stoning; who will stay in place, and who will be exiled; who will live peacefully, and who will endure tribulations; who will have tranquility, and who will

suffer; who will become poor, and who will become rich; who will be lowered, and who will rise."

Nobody with a pulse can hear these words and not be moved by this clear and frightening description of the judgment that takes place on Rosh Hashanah.

To properly grasp the power of this prayer, however, we must be aware of its background. As recorded by the Or Zarua (Rabbi Yishak of Vienna, 13th century), this prayer was composed by a Sadik in Germany named Rabbi Amnon of Mayence. He was a respected, high-ranking advisor to the local bishop, and his stature aroused the envy of other church officials. These officials approached the bishop and urged him to pressure Rabbi Amnon to convert to Christianity. After all, they noted, it would be only appropriate for a person of such rank to be a member of the Christian faith.

And so, the bishop summoned Rabbi Amnon and asked him if he would convert.

"Convert?" Rabbi Amnon said. "Why do I need to do that? I have been a loyal and faithful advisor to you all these years as a Jew. I don't need to become a Christian."

But the bishop persisted, and eventually, Rabbi Amnon, under duress, said, "Look, give me three days to think about it."

As soon as he left the bishop, Rabbi Amnon fell into depression. He could not believe that he had uttered those words – that he would consider abandoning his faith.

Three days later, the bishop summoned Rabbi Amnon and asked what he decided.

"I decided," Rabbi Amnon said, "that you should cut off my tongue, which spoke of the possibility of my rejecting my faith!"

The bishop was incensed. He decreed that right there and then Rabbi Amnon's arms and legs should be amputated.

That Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Amnon asked to be brought by stretcher to the synagogue, and just before Kedusha during the Musaf prayer, he requested permission to recite a prayer. It was then that U'netaneh Tokef was recited for the first time. Rabbi Amnon loudly chanted this prayer which he composed, and as soon as he finished, his soul departed. He later appeared in a dream to one of the leading Rabbis in Germany at that time, Rabbi

Kalonymus, and informed him that U'netaneh Tokef is regarded as a very sacred prayer in the heavens, and should be instituted as part of the Rosh Hashanah service. This prayer thus became an integral part of the Rosh Hashanah prayer service in Ashkenazic congregations, and remains so to this very day.

Nobody understood this message of "who will live and who will die" better than Rabbi Amnon. Just a week earlier, he was a wealthy, prominent man, and suddenly he was tortured to death. He was able to compose this prayer because he experienced firsthand the fragile nature of life, just how quickly fortunes can be reversed.

We all make certain assumptions about our lives. We assume that just as until now we and our families have generally been healthy, this good health will continue during the coming year. We assume that because we've enjoyed safety and security in our neighborhoods, we have no reason for fear. We assume that because we've had a steady job or a successful business for many years now, there is no reason to worry about supporting our families. The story of Rabbi Amnon, and the U'netaneh Tokef prayer, show us that these assumptions are incorrect, that we live with a false sense of security. On Rosh Hashanah, God determines whether our current success and good health will endure. We cannot assume that our situation the previous year or years will necessarily continue.

As frightening as this thought is, the U'netaneh Tokef prayer ends on an encouraging note: "But repentance, prayer and charity eliminate the harsh judgment." Although we have no guarantees, we do have power over the outcome. Through "Teshuba, Tefila, U'sedaka" – repenting from our wrongdoing, pleading to God for mercy, and giving charity – we have the ability to avoid harsh decrees and see our current situation of health and security continue into and through the coming year, Amen.

### Rabbi Wein

The special nature and all of the events of Jewish history are outlined for us in this week's parsha. Ramban in the 13th century comments that anyone who can, so many centuries earlier, accurately foretell the later fate of a people is an exceptional prophet. Moshe certainly fits that description and test. And what more can we add to this phenomenon, now seven hundred-fifty years after Ramban!

The rabbis of the Talmud attributed the crown of wisdom to the one who has a vision of the future.

Even though Moshe is the greatest of all prophets, his title amongst the Jewish people is Moshe the teacher, indicating his wisdom and knowledge are translated into his ability to view the future.

Moshe lays down the basic pattern of all of Jewish history – the struggle to remain Jewish and not succumb to the blandishments of current cultures and beliefs, the illogical and almost pathological enmity of the world to Judaism and the Jewish people, the awful price paid by Jews throughout history and the eventual realization of Jews, and the non-Jewish world as well, of God's guidance in history and human life.

This entire, very complex story is foretold to us in this week's most remarkable parsha. It is no wonder that Jewish tradition dictated that Jewish children should commit this parsha to memory, for within it is recorded the entire essence of Jewish history.

Though we never really know the exact details of the future of the Jewish people, the broad outlines of the story have been known to us for millennia. Just read and study the words of this parsha.

Moshe establishes heaven and earth as witnesses to the covenant and the historical fate of the Jewish people. Rashi explains that not only are they honest and objective witnesses but most importantly they are eternal witnesses. Human witnesses are mortal and passing. Later generations cannot hear their testimony, and even though current video technology attempts to correct this deficiency, much of the personal nuance and force, which colors all human testimony, is lost.

So we rely on heaven and earth to reinforce our belief and commitment to the eternal covenant. It is the very wonders and mysteries of nature itself that point to the Creator. And it is all of human history that rises to testify as to the uniqueness of the Jewish story and the special role that the Jewish people played and continue to play in human events.

The witness testimony of heaven is found in the wonders of the natural world. The witness testimony of earth is found in the history of humankind and of the role of the Jewish people in that amazing, exhilarating and yet depressing story. Moshe begs of us to listen to these two witnesses for it is within their and our ability to know our past and future through their testimony.

Much of their testimony is frightening and worrisome but it is even more frightening to be unaware of our past and future. We should listen carefully to the

parsha. It has much to teach us about our world and ourselves.

**When the Maps of Countries Are Being Redrawn -  
Hold Your Breath !!  
Rabbi Yissocher Frand**

The Torah states "Remember the days of old, understand the years of generation and generation. Ask your father and he will relate it to you, your elders and they will tell you." [Devorim 32:7]. Rashi does not explain this pasuk [verse] according to the simple reading. Rather, Rash"i explains the pasuk as a warning: "Look at what happened to other people who came before you, when they angered Me." "Understand the years of generation after generation" refers to the era of Enosh upon whom HaShem [G-d] poured forth the waters of the Ocean and to the era of the (people of the) Flood, whom HaShem washed away.

The next pasuk continues, "When the Supreme One distributed to nations their portions, when He separated the children of man, He set the borders of nations according to the number of the Children of Israel." [32:8]. Rashi similarly interprets this pasuk: "when He separated the children of man" refers to the Dor Haflaga [Generation of the Dispersion]. This is what happens to those who anger HaShem.

However, we have a long-standing tradition that "Scriptural verses [pasukim] do not leave their simple interpretation" [Shabbos 63a; Yevamos 11b; 24a]. Rashi himself says in a number of places that even though at times he is providing a Midrashic interpretation, the simple interpretation of the pasuk remains. The simple interpretation of these pasukim is an admonition to us to understand history and learn its lessons.

The traditional Jewish belief is that HaShem is not only the Creator of Heaven and Earth, but that He is the G-d of history. The historical events that we witness are the means by which HaShem is continuously directing His world. Simply stated, these pasukim are teaching us that when HaShem establishes the boundaries of the world, it is ultimately because of the Children of Israel. The different wars and conflicts that take place in the world and the different border changes that occur -- according to the simple reading of our pasukim -- all occur because of their ultimate impact on the Jewish nation.

There is a quote from the writings of Rav Elchanon Wasserman (who himself was killed by the Nazis at the beginning of World War II): The Torah gave us a

great key to understand the hinge upon which all historical events revolve -- Devorim 32:8 (the previously quoted pasuk). HaShem sets the borders of nations and causes nations to inherit for the sake of the Jews. History revolves around the Jews. "For Hashem's share is His people; Yaakov is the portion of His possession" [32:9].

Rav Elchanon continued (regarding the Peace Treaty ending World War I), "when the map of Europe was drawn up in Versailles, the borders were already set in Heaven". Sometimes it takes us years, decades, or centuries to put the pieces together. Sometimes, in the interval, the activities seem to have nothing to do with the Jewish people. But the great lesson of history that we are taught in the opening pasukim of this week's parsha is that when HaShem sets up the borders of nations, it is for the sake of the Children of Israel.

I recently read (1993) that the people in MacMillan and Company -- the mapmakers -- are having a very hard time these days. We think that we have hard jobs! -- Imagine the job of mapmakers! -- It has been a very difficult couple of years for them. They had just finished their latest edition of the Atlas, in which they printed East Germany and West Germany. Bonn and Berlin were the respective capitals. All of a sudden, they had to reprint the map. OK, done. Now they think that now they are set. Then, all of a sudden, Yugoslavia divides -- Serbia, Croatia, we cannot even pronounce all these names! When we are talking maps or when we discuss borders -- ultimately we are talking Klal Yisroel.

One does not have to be a politically astute individual to realize the momentousness of the breakup of the Soviet Union. The mapmakers do not know from day to day whether they should draw 15 republics or 12 republics. We ask ourselves what difference does it make if Azerbaijan decides to become independent or not. What is the meaning of all these changes?

This is the lesson of history that we should never forget. These events -- the placement of national boundaries -- have an impact on Klal Yisroel.

At the beginning of World War I, the Ottoman Empire chose the wrong side and allied themselves with the Germans. At that time, one would have had to be exceedingly insightful to have realized that this decision would have a major impact on Jewish history in the twentieth century. Our tendency would have been to think, "Who cares? What's the difference?" But that single event -- coupled with the fact that there was this little country called "Palestine"

under the rule of the Ottoman Turks -- had major ramifications.

When Germany (and the Ottoman Empire) eventually lost World War I; their empires were disassembled. Part of the price that the Ottoman Empire paid for "picking the wrong horse" was that they lost their empire. Their little protectorate called "Palestine" became the British Mandate of Palestine. Not long after that there was a proclamation called the Balfour Declaration. Who would have thought that the Ottoman Turk's poor decision would lead toward the Jews attaining an independent homeland in the Land of Israel?

When we see maps changing -- we need to hold our breaths. This has to do with us. Somehow or another, we will be in the center of this. Sometimes it is for our benefit. Sometimes, G-d forbid, it is to our detriment. But we are always on center stage because "Yaakov chevel nachalos" [Jacob is the portion of His possession]. We are the protectorate of the Master of the Universe.

**Sir Jonathan Sacks**  
**Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations**  
**of the Commonwealth**  
**Message From Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis**

In Jewish tradition, the names we give to places and concepts invariably capture the essence of what they represent. Our central congregational location for prayer is no exception. Located at the heart of our communities, it has three well-known names: beit tefillah, beit kneset and shul.

Firstly, beit tefillah or 'house of prayer'. This title was given by God to the Temple in Jerusalem and continues to be a most apposite term used to this day. It expresses the building's core purpose of providing a place through which we connect with our Creator and experience His presence in a spiritually rewarding way. Through our synagogues facing Jerusalem, we also recognise the centrality of Israel in our lives.

Another name is beit kneset or 'house of gathering'. In vogue since ancient times, beit kneset adds a significant dimension to the role of our synagogues. Indeed, the Greek word synagogue similarly means 'house of gathering'.

The connotation is clear: our synagogues, especially in the Diaspora, are the central focal points for Jewish social and cultural interaction for individuals of all ages and groups of all types. Not only do we enjoy an encounter with God within its walls; we also

engage socially with friends and acquaintances. The weekly kiddush epitomises the beit kneset, providing an opportunity for us to connect with others in a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It is encounters of this nature that weave the social fabric of our communities.

The colloquial name for our synagogues – shul – is taken from the German word meaning 'school'. Historically, the local school was housed within the synagogue building. In this spirit, many shuls today have a kindergarten and run a cheder for children on their premises.

The word 'shul' adds a further imperative for our communal vision. Formal and informal education, for members of all ages and all backgrounds, must be at the heart of our shared communal experiences. In seeking to guarantee the on-going vitality of our congregations, we recognise that an in-depth awareness of our rich heritage will pave the way for a meaningful and fulfilling Jewish life in the future.

It is my hope and prayer that all our community centres live up to the three names we give them, becoming outstanding houses of prayer, houses of gathering and synagogues rolled into one. Providing a combined location for communal spirituality, a meeting place for communal interaction and a home for communal learning will ensure we have vibrant and dynamic centres of Jewish activity. Building on the successes of the past we will transform our synagogues into powerhouses of Jewish religious, social, cultural and educational activity.

I feel very privileged to have been selected to be your Chief Rabbi and I am looking forward to having a close association with your community and others throughout the UK & Commonwealth. We are blessed to have such outstanding rabbis and lay leaders and, together with them, I will be seeking to further enrich community life.

Valerie and I extend to you all our very best wishes for a happy, healthy, peaceful and fulfilling New Year. I look forward to working together with you to develop and grow our local congregations and our wonderful British & Commonwealth Jewish communities for the benefit of us all and all of Am Yisrael.