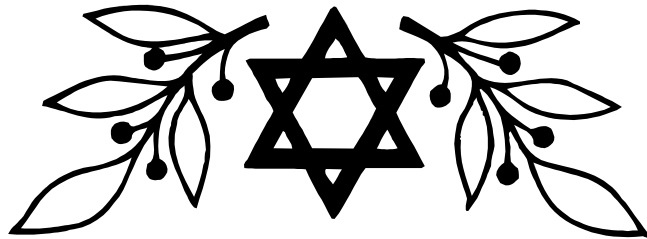
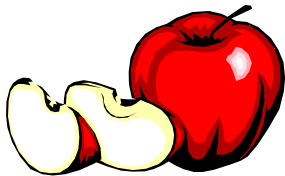




The Richmond Jewish Day School

# A Family Guide for the High Holidays



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# Rosh Hashanah

# ראש השנה

Rosh Hashanah, which literally means the head of the year, commemorates the anniversary of the creation of the world. It is celebrated on the first and second days of the seventh Hebrew month, Tishri. Depending on the solar calendar, Rosh Hashanah occurs in September or October.

Rosh Hashanah, when all living things are judged, is often referred to as the beginning of the Jewish New Year and is commonly known as the Jewish New Year. However, the Hebrew month of Nissan, in which Passover is celebrated, is the first month of the Jewish calendar.

Rosh Hashanah occurs on the first and second days of the Hebrew month Teshri. The name "Rosh Hashanah" is not used in the Bible to discuss this holiday. The Bible refers to the holiday as Yom Ha-Zikkaron (the day of remembrance) or Yom Teruah (the day of the sounding of the shofar). The holiday is instituted in Leviticus 23:24-25.

No work is permitted on Rosh Hashanah. Much of the day is spent in synagogue. The special prayer book for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is called a Machazor.

The common greeting at this time is L'shanah tovah ("for a good year"). This is a shortening of "L'shanah tovah tikatev v'taihatem" (or to women, "L'shanah tovah tikatevi v'taihatemi"), which means, "May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year."



*"Then you shall transmit a blast on the horn; in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, the day of Yom Kippur, you shall have the horn sounded throughout the land...And proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."*

(Leviticus 25). One of the most important observances of this holiday is hearing the sounding of the shofar in the synagogue. There are four different types of shofar notes: tekiah, a 3 second sustained note; shevarim, three 1-second notes rising in tone, teruah, a series of short, staccato notes extending over a period of about 3 seconds; and tekiah gedolah (literally, "big tekiah"), the final blast in a set. The Bible gives no specific reason for this practice. One that has been suggested is that the shofar's sound is a call to repentance. The shofar is not blown if the holiday falls on Shabbat.



## **Rosh Hashanah Traditions**

Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, and Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, are two very important holidays in the Jewish calendar. On Rosh Hashanah, Jews all over the world gather in synagogues to celebrate the day G-d created Adam and Chavah (Eve), the first humans.

We celebrate Rosh Hashanah with sweet foods, like apples dipped in honey and honey cake, as a wish for a sweet year. Some families also celebrate with symbolic foods like the head of a fish, pomegranates, and carrots.

The head of a fish is so that we can be "like the head and not like the tail." This is a symbol of having a year in which we are on top and not the bottom. Pomegranates are symbolic of plenty. Have you ever tried to count how many seeds there are in a pomegranate? Far too many to count. We want plenty of health and happiness for the New Year, just as many good things as there are seed in a pomegranate.

We also eat carrots, and it isn't just to see well in the dark. For Ashkenazi Jews, carrots symbolize the Yiddish word "merren" which also means more. We want more of all the

good things in life. More health, more happiness, more success. For Sephardic Jews, carrots are symbolic of the phrase "Yikaretu oyveychem" which means may your enemies be cut down. We ask that those who wish badly for us not get their wish that they don't succeed.

And of course, we have round Challot made with honey and raisins. These are another symbol of a sweet and happy year.

Rosh Hashanah starts on the first day of Tishrei and lasts two days. Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of the Yamim Noraim, the ten days of atonement.

On Rosh Hashanah, all mankind is judged. G-d writes the judgment for each of us in the Book of Life. This judgment is based on our lives of the year before, and is the decision of what will happen to us in the coming year. But the judgment is not final. The days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur give us a time to change the judgment for good. We are given the chance to improve our coming year through Teshuvah (asking forgiveness), Tefillah (prayer), and Tzedakah (charity).

## **Tachlich**

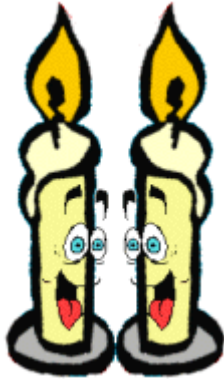
*"You will cast all your sins into the depths of the sea." (Micah 7:19)*

On the afternoon of the first day of Rosh Hashanah it is tradition to walk to a river or spring (preferably one that has fish in it) and recite special prayers called penitential prayers. The Tashlich prayer comes from the Book of Micha (7:18-20) in the TaNaCH. After you say the prayers you throw the breadcrumbs into the water. If the first day of Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbat then Tashlich is traditionally done on the second day.



## **Tashlich**

## Rosh Hashana Blessings



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר  
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל  
שַׁבָּת (וְ) יוֹם טוֹב. (On Friday)

I praise G-d, who is Lord and Ruler over all,  
for teaching us the commandment of greeting this  
(Shabbat and) Festival by the lighting of candles.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁחַחֲנוּ  
וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

I praise G-d, who is Lord and Ruler over all,  
for keeping us well to reach this season.



## **Recipes for Rosh Hashanah**

### **Delicious Honey Cake**

|                                       |                           |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3/4 cup - Sugar                       | 2 cups - Flour            |
| 2 - Eggs                              | 2 tsp. - Baking powder    |
| 1 Tbs. - Oil                          | 1/2 tsp. - Baking soda    |
| 1/2 cup - Honey                       | 1/2 tsp. - Allspice       |
| 1/3 cup - Cold strong coffee (brewed) | 1 tsp. - Cinnamon         |
| 1/4 tsp. - Ginger                     | 1/2 cup - shelled almonds |

Beat eggs until frothy. Add sugar and beat some more. Alternately add liquid and sifted dry ingredients. Pour into greased 9 x 9 inch pan. Gently sprinkle almonds on top of batter. Bake in 350 F oven for 3/4 hour. Test by placing cake tester or toothpick in center of cake. When tester comes out dry, cake is done.

### **Tzimmis**

4 bunches - Carrots  
3 Tbs - Brown sugar  
2 Tbs - Oil  
2 tsp - Salt

Grate/cut carrots into fine pieces. Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Let simmer on a small flame without water. When slightly brown, add a little water. Cook over low heat for about two hours.

### **Cranberry Kugel**

1 cup - Flour  
1 cup - Oats  
2/3 cup - Brown sugar  
1 tsp - Cinnamon  
1 stick - Margarine  
1 can - Cranberry sauce  
1 can - Crushed pineapple

Mix all dry ingredients in a bowl. In a separate bowl, mix cranberry sauce and pineapple together. Place half the dry mixture at the bottom of an 8x8 pan, and layer the cranberry mixture on top. Place the rest of dry mixture as the top layer. Bake at 350 degree F. for 1 hour.

## **Yom Kippur** יום כפור

**Yom Kippur** ("Day of Atonement") is the tenth day of the month of Tishri. On this day, G-d seals our fate for the coming year, therefore, the entire day is spent fasting and praying to G-d for forgiveness and a good year. The major theme of Yom Kippur, as its name implies, is atonement. The source for much of our observance of Yom Kippur is Leviticus.

*And this shall be an eternal law for you. Each year on the tenth day of the seventh month you must fast and do no work. This is true of the native born and of the proselyte who comes to join you. This is because on this day you shall have all your sins atoned, so that you will be cleansed. Before G-d you will be cleansed of your sins. It is a Sabbath of Sabbaths to you, and a day upon which you must fast. This is a law for all time. (Leviticus 16:29-31)*

Yom Kippur is a complete Sabbath; no work can be performed on that day. Jews are supposed to refrain from eating and drinking on Yom Kippur. It is a complete, 25-hour fast beginning before sunset on the evening before Yom Kippur and ending after nightfall on the day of Yom Kippur. The Talmud also specifies additional restrictions that are less well-known: washing and bathing, anointing one's body (with cosmetics, deodorants, etc.), wearing leather shoes.

## **Kol Nidre**

Kol Nidre is a time when we take a searing look inside. We ask ourselves, who can count on my word? Can my children, or my spouse, my friends, my boss? Can God? Can I! Can I count on my own word; Do I trust myself?

In Kol Nidre we make this statement: I realize that if I have made any verbal commitments, if I gave my word on anything, then without recourse to some higher authority there is no backing out. My word is my word—period. My word locks into place a reality that I can no longer undo. That reality, that word, binds me. Imagine a world where contracts didn't have to be signed. Where a person's word was "as good as gold" and a handshake was a done deal. Imagine if people actually lived with that kind of trust in one another. Imagine the integrity.