

Rosh Hashanah
Celebration

About this book

This is an excerpt from the B'nai Noah Prayer Book that is currently being developed with the help of several OBN and Rabbis from around the world. We would like to specifically thank John Muglia for his B'nai Noah Quarterly which has been a valuable resource to our compiling this celebration.

The celebration and prayers have been approved by Rabbis Yoel Schwartz and Yechiel Sitzman in Jerusalem, Israel. These are the prayers that the Oklahoma B'nai Noah Society will be using on Rosh Hashanah this year.

We are sharing this information for those who would like to use it. We would like to make it clear that these prayers are not required or commanded and are compiled as a tool for those who choose to use them. We expect to be able to provide the Prayer Book in it's entirety on the web for free download soon.

May you be inscribed for a sweet New Year!

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Rosh Hashanah (New Year)

Rosh Hashanah, observed on the first and second of Tishrei, is a celebration of the Hebrew New Year. It begins the "Days of Awe," the Jewish high holidays throughout the month of Tishrei.

The holiday of Rosh Hashanah is significant to all humanity because it is the anniversary of the sixth day of creation, on which G-d made the first human beings. Everything had been made ready. The sky, the land, the seas, all the vegetable and animal life - the world in its entirety was prepared for the arrival of mankind. Once the first humans had been created, all of creation could now relate to G-d in a profound way. The universe was finally ready for the fulfillment of its true purpose.

As soon as Adam was created, his first act was to proclaim G-d as the King of the Universe. But this was not enough-he also called upon all of G-d's creatures to worship G-d. This illustrates to us both the foundation of our relationship with G-d and the central focus of Rosh Hashanah: our acceptance of the Almighty as the King of the universe and submission to His total authority.

Rosh Hashanah is a time for us to develop our relationship with the Almighty. It is a time to focus on G-d's sovereignty, repent for our past failings, and recommit ourselves to His service. As the only creatures with free will, we have the unique ability to choose whether or not we worship and serve G-d. When we make this conscious decision to submit to His will, we establish His sovereignty over all Creation. This is the basis of our relationship with G-d and the foundation of our observance of all the commandments.

Rosh Hashanah is called the "Day of Judgment." G-d weighs our good and bad deeds of the previous year against each other, deciding our potential blessings for the next year. For this reason, Rosh Hashanah is a time for us to seriously consider our actions, taking this opportunity to repent for past sins and recommit ourselves to G-d's service. Our Teshuva and prayers of

worship and supplication cause our names to be written in the "Book of Life," bringing G-d's mercy and blessings for the year to come.

The special Torah readings of Rosh Hashanah also connect to the significance of the day. On the first day, the story of the birth of Isaac is read in the synagogue. These verses demonstrate G-d's Divine Providence and Omnipotence through Sarah's mothering her first child at the age of ninety; teach the importance of a proper upbringing through Sarah's removal of Ishmael's bad influence on Isaac; and explain Abraham's rise in importance, as the king of the Philistines personally visited him to establish a peace agreement. The second day's reading is of the binding of Isaac, which illustrates Abraham's total submission to G-d with everything in his life. All of these teachings directly relate to the significance and observance of Rosh Hashanah.

Also central to the observance of this High Holiday is a focus on solemn and fervent prayer. Remorseful for our shortcomings of the past year, we turn to G-d in supplication for His mercy, ardently petitioning His forgiveness and future blessings. We convey our souls' true needs, both spiritual and material.

The birth of mankind was the pinnacle of the creation of the universe. With the formation of Adam from the dust of the ground and the life-giving "breath" of G-d (Genesis 2:7), He established the vehicle for the revelation of His magnificence in the physical universe. When we acknowledge the Almighty as L-rd and Master over our lives, repenting of our sins and renewing our commitment to His divine will, we work to achieve this purpose.

Rosh Hashanah encompasses two days (sundown to sundown), the first and second of Tishrei. Although the various commandments and customs particular to its observance are only incumbent on the Jewish people, Rosh Hashanah is of universal significance.

Noachides are strongly encouraged to take part in certain important aspects of its observance.

It is recommended that Noachides have a special meal on the first evening of Rosh Hashanah. Traditional Jewish foods for Rosh Hashanah are certainly available if so desired. These include challah (sweet bread) and apples dipped in honey, and pomegranates. These traditional foods symbolize sweetness and abundance.

The focus of this holiday is on repentance and prayer. We appraise ourselves, evaluating our previous shortcomings, and turn to G-d for forgiveness.

Through our heartfelt and earnest prayers we acknowledge G-d as King over every part of our lives and entreat his blessings to satisfy our genuine needs. We commit ourselves to faithful service during the New Year.

As already explained, the special Torah readings in Genesis 20-22 for Rosh Hashanah teach important principles related to this holiday.

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Prayer

Prayer Customs

Contrary to current Western custom, covering one's head during prayer as a sign of deference to and respect for the Almighty has been an accepted practice since the beginning of time. This custom, however, is not commanded and may or may not be practiced according to an individual's convictions. Those who do cover their heads in prayer may use any variety of covering they choose, such as a scarf, hat, or prayer garment. Those who use a prayer garment wait until after the pre-prayer meditation to put it on.

Prayer garments for non-Jews must not have the Tzitzit (special corner fringes) which are commanded for Israel as a sign of their covenant. Rabbi Yoel Schwartz recommends that our prayer garments incorporate some reminder of the Rainbow Covenant. Whether it is in the form of a robe, scarf, or shawl wear it in the spirit of reverence and humility.

Unless, one is sitting at a meal, one who is able to do so stands during prayer.

Pre-Prayer Meditation

What is frail man that You should remember him, and the son of mortal man that You should be mindful of him? Yet, You have made him but slightly less than the angels, and crowned him with soul and splendor. [Psalms 8: 5-6]

HASHEM is good to all; His mercies are on all His works.
[Psalms 145: 9]

Render unto HASHEM the honor due His Name, Bow to HASHEM in the beauty of holiness. [Psalms 29: 2]

HASHEM, our Master, how mighty is Your Name throughout the earth!
[Psalms 8: 10]

How precious is Your kindness, O G-d! Mankind takes refuge in the shadow of Your wings. [Psalms 36: 8]

HASHEM, my G-d, in You I seek refuge.
[Psalms 7: 2]

G-d said, "This (Rainbow) is the sign of the covenant that I give between Me and you, and every living being that is with you, to generations forever"
[Genesis 9: 12]

I am the servant of the Holy One, blessed be He, before Whom and before Whose Glorious Torah (Teachings) I bow down at all times. Not on man do I rely, nor do I lean on a created being, but only on the God of the Heavens Who is the God of Truth, Whose Torah is Truth and Whose Prophets are Prophets of Truth, and Who abounds in doing goodness and truth. In Him alone is my trust, and to His Holy and Glorious Name I utter praises.

(Prayer garments are now put on.)

Kindling Lights

(Candles are usually lit by the woman of the home in recognition that Rosh Hashanah is set apart from ordinary days. While Jews light candles before dark, B'nai Noah light candles after dark in recognition that there is a distinction between Israel and other nations.)

(If Rosh Hashanah falls on the Seventh Day (Shabbos) include the words in brackets { })

You are blessed and praised Lord G-d, Ruler of the universe, Who makes the world holy by providing commandments to guide and elevate mankind.

May You bless us with spiritual enlightenment on {the Seventh Day and on} this festival night, O Lord, the Creator of light, Who sustains the universe with His Word and Who has brought us to this season.

May it be Your will, Hashem, G-d of Israel, and G-d of all Humanity, that You show favour to me [my husband, my sons, my daughters, my father, my mother] and all my relatives; and that You grant us a long and good life; that You remember us with a beneficent memory and blessing; that You consider us with a consideration of salvation and compassion; that You bless us with great blessings; that You make our household complete; and that You cause Your presence to dwell among us.

Privilege me to raise children and grandchildren who are wise and understanding, who love and fear G-d, that they may grow up to be people of truth, attached to Hashem, that they illuminate the world with good and righteous deeds, and that each labour be in the service of the Creator. Please hear my supplications at this time and let Your countenance shine upon us. Amen

Psalms 1

Happy is the man that has not walked in the counsel of the wicked or stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the L-RD; and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, and whose leaf does not wither; and in whatsoever he does he shall prosper. Not so the wicked; but they are like the chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, or sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the L-RD regards the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.

Prayer for Parents

May G-d Who richly blessed Noah and his family, bestow a blessing on my father and mother. May they have a long life, a life of peace, a life of good, a life of blessing, a life of sustenance, a life of bodily vigour, a life of affluence and honour, a life imbued with the love of Your Torah of the Seven Laws, a life in which You will fulfil all the aspirations of their heart; For they are the pillars of this/our household.

Prayer for Children

(Customarily, parents will place their hands on their children's head while reciting the following.)

May Hashem, the Most High G-d, Maker of heaven and earth bless {name each child} to walk with Him among the Righteous of the Nations, now and forevermore.

Prayer for Remembrance

Hashem, our G-d, You remember the deeds of the World and You consider all the creatures fashioned since earliest times. All secrets and mysteries are revealed before You, for there is no forgetfulness before Your Throne of Glory

and nothing is hidden from before Your eyes. Everything is revealed and known before You, Hashem, our G-d, who observes all and sees to the very end of time. You made it known from the beginning of creation that You would sit in Judgment over all that You create.

And even regarding countries, You decide which is destined for the sword and which for peace, which for hunger and which for abundance; and You consider all of your creatures to remember them for life or death. Who is not recalled before Your Divine Court? The remembrance of everything fashioned comes before You: everyone's thoughts, schemes and deeds, the Accomplishments of man's activity, and even the motives behind man's deeds. Fortunate is the man who does not forget You, and the human being who takes strength in You, for those who seek You will never stumble nor will those who take refuge in You ever be humiliated.

For the remembrance of all Your works comes before You and You analyze the deeds of them all. Indeed, You remembered Noah with love and in mercy You recalled his deeds, when You brought the waters of the Flood to destroy all living flesh because of their evil ways. Consequently his remembrance comes before You, Hashem, our G-d, to make his offspring as abundant as the dust of the world and his descendants like the sand by the sea. As it is written in Your Torah: G-d remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the cattle that were with him in the ark, and G-d caused a spirit to pass over the earth and the water subsided.

Therefore, Hashem, our G-d, we know that our eyes and hearts must be turned towards You alone to hope that our salvation and redemption will be justified in Your sight. Judge us, then, in mercy as You judged Noah. Judge us with compassion and send Your Messiah to Your chosen People, Israel, in order that *the Righteous among the nations**, may also benefit from Your glory.

- Changed by editor for clarification.

Adapted by Rabbi Michael Katz from the Rosh Hashanah service.

*Rosh Hashanah
Celebration Meal*

Kiddush

{Recited over wine or grape juice}

(On the Seventh Day (Shabbos) begin here:

It was evening and it was morning, the sixth day. So the heavens and the earth were finished with their entire compliment. Thus, on the seventh day, G-d had completed His work, which He had undertaken, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work, which He had done. Then G-d blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it He rested from all His creative work, which G-d had brought into being to fulfil its purpose.)

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe
Who creates the fruit of the vine.
(Drink the Wine or Grape Juice)

Washing of the Hands

Suggested meditation for washing of the hands

{Rabbi Schwartz's comment: " The only reason to ask a Ben Noah to wash his/her hands is out of respect for prayers and as a reminder that every person should have hands that are clean from wrong doing toward his fellow man. For these purposes any method of washing hands should suffice."}

Who may ascend the mountain of the L-RD?
Who may stand in His holy place?
He who has clean hands and a pure heart.
[Psalms 24:3-4]

Symbolic Foods

(The following is an adaptation from the Rosh Hashanah meal service in the Artscroll Machzor. These particular blessings are designed to pay special attention to the Seven Laws of B'nai Noah and therefore have more meaning for B'nai Noah society. The foods chosen for association with these blessings are sweet because the blessings are created in a positive tone. They are designed this way because prayer in the service of Hashem is sweet.

After each petition the food associated with it is then passed for each person to have a piece to eat. Another option would be to pass them around before hand so that each person has their own at the time of the reading of the petition. Of course you can also choose to just say the petitions with out utilizing the food at all.

As B'nai Noah we are not commanded for any particular way, so each family/group can make it meaningful for them. If there is a designated reader to say these petitions for a family or group, all attending should say amen right after the reader completes each petition and before he eats the item.)

Against Idolatry *(Mango or Papaya)*

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that all humanity turn from idolatry.

Against Theft *(Figs)*

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that the desires of our enemies be removed.

Establishing courts of Justice *(Beets)*

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that justice prevail in the world.

Against Blasphemy

(Dates)

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that the words of our mouths always be favorable to You.

Against Homicide

(Plums)

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that the decree of our sentence be torn asunder; and may Your protection reign over us.

Against Elicit Behavior

(Fish)

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that our desires be in the service of Hashem.

Against Eating the Limb of a Living Animal

(No food is associated with this blessing)

May it be Your will Hashem that you recall our kindnesses, overlook our iniquities, and grant us forgiveness.

Merits of Society

(Pomegranate)

May it be Your will Hashem, Lord G-d that our merits increase as the seeds of a Pomegranate.

Blessing for Bread

You are blessed Lord G-d sovereign of the universe Who brings forth bread from the earth.

(Pass the bread and let each person break a bite sized portion of bread, dip in honey and then eat it.

Blessing for Apples

(Pass the apple pieces and let each person dip one in honey and recite the following blessing.)

Blessed are You Hashem, Lord G-d, Sovereign of the world, Creator of the fruit of the trees.

(Eat a small piece of the apple and before it is completely finished recite the following prayer.)

May it be you will Lord G-d that You grant us a good and sweet New Year.

Eat the Festive Meal

Blessing After the Meal

Blessed are You, King of the Universe, Who feeds the whole world with His goodness, pleasantness, grace and mercy. He gives bread to all flesh and the world is full of His Mercy. Due to His great goodness, we have never lacked and will never be in need of food forever. His great Name feeds and gives everyone his livelihood, does good to everyone, and prepares food for all those that He has created.

Blessing of the New Moon

(When the new moon is visible, go outside to view it and recite the following)

Heavenly Father, Lord of the Universe, as the heavens proclaim Your glory, so the New Moon proclaims Your providence. Even when we do not see Your guiding hand, You will still emerge from the darkness to renew our knowledge and love for You.

Remove all darkness and obscurity from the earth and restore Your People Israel with the coming of the Anointed Redeemer. For we wait only upon You.

And may our eyes behold Your return in mercy to Zion, so that the redeemed shall walk in it; and the ransomed of the L-rd shall return, and come with shouting unto Zion, crowned with joy everlasting. They shall attain joy and gladness, while sorrow and sighing flee.

May it come to fulfilment where “many peoples will go and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the Mountain of HASHEM, to the Temple of the G-d of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths.’” [Isaiah 2: 3]

Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who restores His divine presence to Zion.

(Adapted from Rabbi Bindman’s suggested New Moon prayer.)

Shema

SHEMA, YISRAEL: ADONI ELOHEINU, ADONI ECHAD!

HEAR, O ISRAEL: THE L-RD OUR G-D, THE L-RD IS ONE!

Blessed be the Name Whose Glorious Kingdom is forever and ever!

And HASHEM G-d commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat”

[Genesis 2: 16]

But flesh; with its soul, its blood, you shall not eat.

[Genesis 9: 4]

And these words, which I command you, this day shall be in your heart.

You shall impress them upon your children, and you shall speak of them when you sit at home, and when you go on a journey, when you lie down, and when you rise up. [Deuteronomy 6: 6-7]

The Torah of HASHEM is perfect, it restores the soul; the testimony of HASHEM is trustworthy, making the simple one wise.

The orders of HASHEM are upright, gladdening the heart; the command of HASHEM is clear, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of HASHEM is pure, enduring forever; the judgements of HASHEM are true, altogether righteous.

They are more desirable than gold – than even much fine gold; and sweeter than honey – than drippings from the combs.

Also – when Your servant is scrupulous in them – in observing them there is great reward.

Who can discern mistakes? From unperceived faults cleanse me. Also, from intentional sins, restrain Your servant; let them not rule me, then I shall be perfect; and cleansed of great transgression. [Psalm 19: 8-14]

Song

Haveinu Shalom Alechem