

# L'Chaim

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Weekly Publication  
for every Jewish Person  
A Chasivah U'Chasimah Tovah  
For a Good and Sweet year.

September 9, 2010 – 1 Tishrei, 5770

1137: ROSH HASHANA / HA'AZINU

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## Living with the REBBE



The Torah designates the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei as the date on which we celebrate Rosh Hashana, the New Year. However, this is not the anniversary of the beginning of creation, for the Talmud teaches that the first day of creation was actually five days earlier on the 25th of Elul.

Nevertheless, we celebrate the new year on the sixth day of creation which is actually the day on which Adam, the first person, was created.

The reason for this is that it wasn't until Adam was created that the Creator Himself was recognized. In fact, it was man who instilled an awareness of G-d into all of creation.

One of the primary characteristics by which man is distinguished from all other creatures is the free will with which he has been endowed by G-d. This "gift" must be properly utilized, for it allows him to rise above all of creation and achieve the very highest of spiritual levels.

G-d revealed His holy Torah to help man achieve perfection and find the right way in life. G-d's Torah is eternal, and its directives apply in every time and in every place.

On Rosh Hashana man is not only judged by G-d but must render judgment upon himself. As soon as Adam was created, he declared, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the L-rd our Maker."

Thus, each year on Rosh Hashana, we follow his example and accept G-d's sovereignty upon ourselves anew.

On Rosh Hashana we resolve to live our daily lives in accordance with the Torah's laws, and to do so in the very finest manner of which we are capable.

Of course, a lot of inner strength is necessary in order to live up to our resolution. But is it really possible to experience the same sense of G-d's Kingship as our ancestor Adam?

The answer is a resounding "yes!"

G-d grants each and every one of us immense powers - a tremendous capacity for choosing the right path. Indeed, when we uncover these inner strengths, nothing is beyond our reach, and on Rosh Hashana we can surely attain the same perception and recognition of G-d in our daily lives as did Adam, and extend that recognition to those around us.

Thus, on Rosh Hashana we declare: "And every creature shall know that You have created it...and every soul shall say, 'The L-rd G-d of Israel is King, and His sovereignty reigns over all.'" ■

*Adapted from Likutei Sichot of the Rebbe, volume 9*

## Getting a Head

The Jewish New Year is called "Rosh Hashana." If you know a little Hebrew, you might have a question about the name. Because the Hebrew word "rosh" means "head." So a literal translation of "Rosh Hashana" would be the "Head of the Year."

What's the significance of calling the New Year "Rosh Hashana?"

When we say something is the "head," we're comparing it to the head of the body. What is the nature of the head? First, it guides, conducts and directs all the limbs of the body. The hand moves, at the discretion of the head (the brain inside the head); the foot moves when the head wants - and only when the head wants. This applies to all the other limbs and organs, internal and external.

This is an easy analogy to understand, since we already use it when talking about those who lead a group of people or even a nation. We call that individual the "head" of the country.

But the head also includes within it all the other limbs. From it flows the life-force that allows the organs and cells to feel, move, react, etc. The nerves all begin in the brain, and spread throughout the body, reaching, one way or another, every cell and system.

In other words, the rest of the body responds as a result of its development from the brain. So there's an interdependence: the head expresses itself through the organs and limbs and systems, and they derive their life-force from the head.

So, we see that the brain contains within itself the life-force

of every organ, in a manner delicate, refined, concealed - spiritual, if you will. Afterwards, that "hidden energy" becomes manifest in the "vessel" or organ - the eye sees because of the delicate nerve endings within it, for example. We feel ourselves walking - not just the movement of the feet, but the sensations within the foot - because there is "revealed" the life-force - the nerve endings - in the brain.

In other words, the power to act depends on the connection between the organ (even the heart, lungs and liver) and the brain, through the nerves. Without that connection, and the "nervous energy" from the head, the organ could not act, move or react.

And that's why Rosh Hashana is called Rosh Hashana! Just as the head leads the body, so does Rosh Hashana lead the year. According to Jewish mystical teachings, how we approach Rosh Hashana, how we conduct ourselves on Rosh Hashana, sets the tone for the entire year.

But Rosh Hashana "sets the tone" in more than an emotional or cultural sense. It "sets the tone" spiritually. Just as the eye sees or the hand holds because of the nerves within each, that grew with each, that are connected to the brain, so too the mitzvot (commandments) - spiritual limbs in a sense - that we do throughout their year have a spiritual strength derived from how we develop ourselves, connect with the source of mitzvot, on Rosh Hashana.

For this, and other reasons, it's important on Rosh Hashana to "get our heads straight." ■

Important Times				September 8 – 17, 2010	
	Shacharis	Light Candles	Other		
Wednesday September 8	6:45 am	6:27 pm	Selichos 6:15 AM		
Thursday September 9	9:30 am	7:21 pm	Mincha immediately after Shacharis Musaf Maariv 7:00 pm Tashlich 5:00 pm		
Friday September 10	9:30 am	after 6:24 pm			
Shabbos Day Sept 11	9:30 am	N/A	Chassidus 8:15 am   Kabbalah Class 9:05 am Shabbos Ends 7:18 pm		
Sun Sept 12 (Fast of Gedaliah)	8:00 am	N/A	Fast Begins 4:54 am   Fast Ends 7:04 pm		
<b>September 13–17 Shacharis</b> 7:00 am   Mon./Thurs. 6:45 am <b>Minchah/Maariv</b> 6:15 pm					

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## It Once Happened

**By E. Lesches** In the little town of Lubavitch, the month of Elul was drawing to a close. The winds of teshuva (repentance) had blown through the village for 30 days, aiding everyone in perfecting their spiritual service. More Psalms, more charity, more Torah study. The frenzied preparation reached its climax.

The setting sun signaled the beginning of a new year. Many thousands of Chasidim poured into the town, eager to spend Rosh Hashana with Rabbi Menachem Mendel, the third Rebbe of Chabad-Lubavitch, known as the Tzemach Tzedek. They crammed into the Rebbe's shul. A hush fell on the room as the Tzemach Tzedek entered. Maariv, the evening service, began.

It was an unusual Maariv. The Tzemach Tzedek appeared drawn, worried. His prayers were imbued with extraordinary fervor, as though - if it were possible - they were more fervent than an ordinary Rosh Hashana. Fear and dread gripped every heart. This is the time when "the angels tremble, terror seizes them, and they exclaim: 'the Day of Judgment is here.'" The Chasidim redoubled their concentration, desperately trying to arouse Divine mercy. Everyone felt that something unusual was in the air.

That night after the prayers, the Rebbe joined his family in the holiday meal. Though the Rebbes minimized all talk on Rosh Hashana, the Tzemach Tzedek would always make it a point to speak during the meal. He discussed current events in the capital, the names and ranks of different ministers and the political situation in general. Reb Yehuda Leib, one of the Rebbe's sons, would remark, "He is performing wonders in Petersburg right now."

This year was no different. The Tzemach Tzedek related all the goings-on in the capital and focused on certain ministers and their roles. In fact, he seemed more detailed than in other years.

The day of Rosh Hashana dawned and throngs of Chasidim streamed to the Rebbe's shul. Again the Rebbe's prayers were permeated with emotion. After the morning prayer was completed and the Torah reading was finished, everyone prepared themselves for the mitzva (commandment) of shofar.

A feeling of awe enveloped the large shul as the sons of the Tzemach Tzedek took their places around the bima, each in his designated place. The Tzemach Tzedek himself finished his preparations, readying himself to blow the shofar. His face burned brightly as he sang softly to himself, his eyes closed in deep concentration. Suddenly his voice resonated throughout the shul, "Woe! My heart! A Psalm..."

Panic gripped the congregation and tears flowed freely. Some evil decree prompted the Rebbe's unusual outburst, no doubt. Everyone's heart was open, raw and receptive. The congregation recited the Psalm seven times as required and the Rebbe began the shofar blasts... ■

Minister Suvorin, minister of Petersburg, the capital, studied his reflection in the mirror gracing the walls of the czar's antechamber. He was waiting for his scheduled appointment with His Majesty. In his hand was the document in which he had invested so much work. It concerned the great rabbi, the one they called the "Tzemach Tzedek."

It was intolerable that a rabbi should have such power, what with all his followers spread across White Russia. His power lay in his choice of residence, a small village away from prying eyes and government informers.

No more. The rabbi would now be forced to move to either Petersburg or Kiev. His followers would think twice before visiting their rabbi in such a large city. They would be too easily followed, easily questioned, easily inspected. He had the official document in his hand now: all it needed was the czar's signature.

Suvorin stared out the window. There had been some trouble lately - anger was brewing among the populace, and he was mostly to blame. Two new decrees had raised the ire of Petersburg's residents, but they were just a mob of common folk anyway. After all, his intentions had been pure.

He smiled as he recalled the new decrees. No smoking was allowed on city streets; it was untidy. No meat would be sold within the city; no longer would the beautiful capital carry the smell of rotting flesh. He, Minister Suvorin, would make Petersburg the most beautiful capital in the world.

A liveried servant entered the antechamber and bowed. "Minister Suvorin," he said. "His Majesty will see you now."

Suvorin followed the servant, beads of perspiration forming on his forehead. He entered the audience chamber and bowed low before the czar.

The czar was in a foul mood. "You passed two decrees banning the sale of meat and the use of cigarettes. The population is angry; the decrees are unbearable."

The czar tore the document out of the minister's hand and hurled it angrily on the floor. Suvorin turned white, bowed low and quickly left.

The minister stood once again in the antechamber, his mind whirling. His dream had been shattered. Gone was his goal of restraining the great rabbi. For such was the accepted law: any document that had been thrown away by the czar was automatically negated and it was illegal to present the request again. The rabbi would stay in the village of Lubavitch after all.

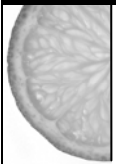
Far away in the town of Lubavitch, the Tzemach Tzedek finished sounding the shofar. He returned to his place and the congregation resumed their prayers. ■

*Reprinted from Beis Moshiaich Magazine*

## Moshiaich Matters

The shofar is blown twice on Rosh Hashana to "confuse the Satan." The first time the Satan is worried that this is the shofar of Moshiaich. The second time, he is sure Moshiaich has come! He knows that all evil will be destroyed in the Redemption. He gets confused and doesn't accuse the Jews. But the Satan is not a fool! He knows about shofar on Rosh Hashana. Why should he think Moshiaich has come? Because the shofar arouses repentance, and repentance brings the Redemption. After the shofar is blown the first time, the Satan is worried that our repentance has brought Moshiaich. By the second time, he is sure that Moshiaich has come! ■

*(Meam Loez p. 284)*



# SLICE OF LIFE

## Scenes from Rosh Hashana

by Mina Gordon

Last year, Rabbi Yossi Gordon spent Rosh Hashana in Tasmania, as he has done nearly every Rosh Hashana since 1985, leading the only Orthodox minyan in the entire island-state. As of the last census, only about 275 residents described themselves as Jewish, in an area the size of Israel. Rosh Hashana services attracted about 30 people, with another 20 agreeing to come at five o'clock on Sunday, the second day of Rosh Hashana, to fulfill the "mitzva (commandment) of the day" - hearing the shofar.

After services concluded, everyone was invited to a Rosh Hashana meal at the home of David and Penina Clark, to whom Rabbi Gordon refers as the Abraham and Sara of Tasmania. Like Abraham's tent, their home is an oasis in a spiritual desert, providing nourishment for both body and soul of locals and tourists.

"Let's walk down the main street, in case we meet another Jew," said Rabbi Gordon on the way from shul to the Clarks' home.

"What? Meet another Jew? In Hobart, Tasmania? Do you think that if you stop three hundred people on the street, even one would be Jewish?"

"I don't have to stop anybody; if there's a Jew, he'll stop me," answered Rabbi Gordon.

They walked down the main road. No lost soul approached them. Everyone turned at the street where the Clarks live. "You go on ahead. I'm stopping off at my hotel room for a little while," said Rabbi Gordon.

The rabbi spent more time in his room than he expected. When he caught sight of the clock, he knew he'd have to hurry. He was walking quickly when he noticed an older man trying to catch his attention. "Excuse me! Shana Tova (good year)! Where's a shul around here? I've been touring Australia with friends, and we've just arrived here. This must be the first time in my life that I didn't go to shul on Rosh Hashana. Maybe I can

still chahp arein (catch something)."

"I'm sorry, but services finished a while ago, but come with me, and you can at least hear shofar."

"Wonderful! My name is Yona..."

"And I'm Yossi Gordon."

"Related to Rabbi Sholom Gordon? You certainly look a lot like him."

The rabbi was astounded. "How did you know my father?"

"I was one of his first students when he came to Newark in 1942 as a young yeshiva student. When I realized that I almost missed out on Rosh Hashana this year, I stepped out to look for a shul. I saw you walking and for a moment I thought my teacher had come to help me! I can still remember the page of Talmud he taught me, Bava Metziah daf 63: "D'sanai Rav Oshiya- Rabbi Oshiya taught, harei shehaya noishe b'chaveiroi maneh, one demanded from his friend payment of 100..." ■

*Reprinted with permission from the N'Shei Chabad Newsletter*

by Yehudis Cohen

Rabbi Shmuel Kot is one of hundreds of emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in the former Soviet Union. He is also the Federation of Jewish Communities representative and chief rabbi of that country.

Rabbi Kot reminisced about how he and his wife Chani arrived in Estonia in the fall of 2000, just days before Rosh Hashana. At that time in Talinn, there was no proper synagogue. The elderly Jews who still celebrated some of the Jewish holidays would gather in a decrepit wooden structure that could barely hold 50 people. The year the Kots came to Talinn, 120 Jews of all ages showed up for Rosh Hashana services, so excited were they to meet the young rabbi and rebbetzin.

In the afternoon, the Kots held a program for youngsters after which they invited the children and their parents to walk with them to the seashore for the traditional "Tashlich" service.

As they walked, Rabbi Kot noticed that all of the children and their parents kept a distance from him. All except for one - Maxime. "Am I imagining it, or is everyone trying to stay away from me?" the rabbi asked Maxime.

"No Rabbi," Maxime answered bashfully, "it's not in your mind. It's just that you look so Jewish and people are afraid to be seen with you on the street."

"Is there what to be afraid of here in Estonia?" the rabbi asked with concern.

"We are afraid of ourselves, Rabbi. We are embarrassed to show that we are Jews."

A mere ten years later, a beautiful new synagogue and community center has been built. In addition to Sabbath and holiday services in its main hall, there is a kosher kitchen that prepares food for the many events as well as the needy, a mikva, a Jewish museum, and offices, as well as classrooms for the kindergarten, Sunday school, teen-programs and adults education classes.

Last year, on Rosh Hashana, when Rabbi Kot looked around the main sanctuary at the 300 people gathered there, he was delighted to see university students who are part of the FJC- sponsored STARS program helping the elderly congregants. Seated at the holiday meal afterwards were dozens of teens, university students and young professionals. In the afternoon, as Rabbi Kot and Maxime walked side-by-side to the seashore for the Tashlich service, there was a festive feeling in the air. Scores of Jewish youth and elders walked through the streets of Talinn singing Jewish songs, heads held high, without embarrassment.

"Do you remember nine years ago Maxime..." Rabbi Kot's voice trailed off.

"Yes, I remember, Rabbi. Today, we walk as proud Jews." ■

*For more about Chabad-Lubavitch in the former Soviet Union visit [www.fjc.ru](http://www.fjc.ru)*

### He was corrupted; the blemish is not to his children (Deut. 32:5)

No matter how corrupt and degraded a person may be, he always wants better for his children. He does not want them to continue in his sorry ways...

(Rabbi Yonasan Eibeshutz)

### Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth (Deut. 32:1)

Why did Moses address the heavens and earth? Because G-d had already likened the Children of Israel to these things. G-d said to Abraham: "Look up into the heavens and count the stars...so shall your seed be." G-d also promised, "And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth."

(Sifri)

### Of the Rock that bore you were you unmindful, and you forgot the G-d Who bore you (Deut. 32:10)

When G-d created man He gave him the gift of being "unmindful" - the ability to forget and allow time to heal the wounds which would befall him in this world. But, G-d claims, what did you do with this gift? You misused it, and forgot about Me!

(Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk)

## Thoughts that Count

??? MEZUZAH  
 ☆ ☆ ☆ DID U KNOW

Even when using a kosher scroll, if the scroll is incorrectly affixed to the doorpost a Jew cannot fulfill the mitzvah (commandment) of mezuzah.

## The Rebbe Writes

Following is a free translation of the Rebbe's letter addressed to the entire Jewish people

18th of Elul, 5750 [1990]

...Apropos of preparedness for the new year, it is well to reflect on the dual contents of every year: there is the general significance to each and all incoming years; and there is the special significance connected with certain specific features of a particular year, whereby the year differs from other years.

One such noteworthy feature of the incoming new year is that the two days of Rosh Hashana occur on Thursday and Friday, the eve of Shabbos, leading directly into the holy Shabbos, thus emphasizing and affirming the mutual character of Rosh Hashana and Shabbos.

The Rosh Hashana days - the awe-inspiring days - fill every Jewish heart with a holy trepidation that permeates one's whole being. The elevated perception of holiness is experienced not merely during many hours highlighted by preparation for and performance of the day's specific mitzva (commandment), namely, the sounding of the shofar; or the special prayers and supplications of Rosh Hashana, and the like; but it is a continuous experience throughout the entire duration of the two-day period of Rosh Hashana that permeates a Jew with the holy Rosh Hashana spirit.

And this inspiration finds expression in the conduct of every Jew - man, woman, and child - in addition to the general tendency to be more circumspect in behavior, what with spending hours in shul, abstaining from "unnecessary talk," utilizing every available minute in saying Psalms, and the like - to the extent that even the meals of Rosh Hashana, which have been referred to in terms of "eat sumptuous foods and drink sweet beverages," are affected by the Rosh Hashana spirit of holiness (as stated in the conclusion of the verse), "for this day is holy unto G-d."

Similar to it is the holiness of Shabbos: "You shall keep the Shabbos because it is holy." The G-dly holiness of Shabbos pervades every Jew, through and through, so that one feels different and inspired throughout all the hours of Shabbos in all one's activities.

There is a well-known principle in our holy Torah: "What is repeated three times acquires the force of chazaka [permanence]." The term is derived from the word chozek, strength, and carries an assured presumption that having occurred three times, it will take hold and continue the same way.

If the principle applies to non-obligatory matters, it is certainly true in regard to matters of holiness that already have the quality of everlasting Torah endurance, where each action has a lasting and perpetual impact.

How much more so in the case of Rosh Hashana which is designated, literally, the head (rosh) of the year, not just the "beginning" of the year. This means that in addition to being the beginning of the year it is (also, and essentially) the "head of the year."

Just as the head directs all the organs of the body, and it is only in this way that each organ carries out its purpose in the fullest measure, also as an organ per se - so Rosh Hashana directs and animates each and every day of the year in all particulars of the daily life.

Hence it is understandable that since there is a chazaka in the state of holiness mentioned above, it exercises a very strong influence on the entire year, so that all one's activities, in each and all days of the year, are carried out under the strong influence of the sublime holiness of the first three days of the year.

May the Alm-ghty grant that every one of us, in the midst of the Jewish People, should firmly resolve and act in accordance with the perceptions outlined above, and in a manner indicated at the head of this week's Torah portion starting: "You are standing firmly this day before Hashem, your G-d..." in your firm commitment.

Indeed, this resolve in all its aspects will bring about an ever growing measure of Hashem's blessings in general, and the Rosh Hashana blessing in particular: To be inscribed and sealed for a good and sweet year, both materially and spiritually.

And more especially - the blessing "for which we hope every day and all day" - the true and complete Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, of whom G-d says, "I have found my servant David," very soon in our own days.

With esteem and blessing for a K'siva vachasima tova and for a good and sweet year... □

### What's In A Name?

**SHMUEL** means, "I asked him of the L-d" (I Samuel 1:20). The prophet Shmuel was born through the prayers of Chana, his mother. He was one of the greatest prophets, and anointed King Saul and King David.

**SARA** means "princess." Sara was the first matriarch and Abraham's wife (Genesis 17:15). She was considered to be a greater prophet than Abraham. Sara was the first to light Shabbat candles; her candles, connoting peace, lasted for an entire week.

### News

**New Torah Scrolls**  
 Chabad of Holon, Israel, recently celebrated the welcoming of a new Torah scroll into their synagogue. In addition, Chabad of Kiryat Sharett, Chabad of Yavneh, and the Beit Aryeh Synagogue in Lod, Israel, also welcomed new Torah scrolls. In Bryansk, Russia, the first Torah scroll to be written in the city in over 100 years was completed amidst great celebration and then paraded through the city streets. The Completion Ceremony took place in the Central Congressional Hall in Bryansk. A Torah was also welcomed into the Jewish Community Center in Olyanovsk, Russia. Chabad of Little Neck, New York, welcomed their first Torah Scroll with lively celebration that included singing and dancing. □

## A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

Rabbi Shmuel M. Butman

On the eve of this new year, 5771, we would like to wish the entire Jewish People our sincerest blessings for a k'siva vachasima tova, l'shana tova u'msuka - to be inscribed and sealed for a good, sweet year, with blessings from every letter of the Hebrew Alef-Beis. May this year be:

A year of "Arise and have mercy on Zion,"... uplifted in matters of Moshiach and the Redemption... faith in G-d and Moses His servant... traveling with the Heavenly clouds... Revealed Wonders; Wonders in Everything... the building of the Holy Temple... trust; Great wonders... the true and complete Redemption; Dignified Wonders... victory... the seventh generation is the generation of Redemption... King David lives and is eternal; "Those who rest in the dust will arise and sing and he will lead them"... Moshiach is coming and he has already come... the revelation of Moshiach; "He will redeem us"... "And they believed in G-d and in Moses His servant"; "This one will comfort us"; the wonders of true freedom... a new song; an abundance of good (Rambam); the king shall live; inscribed and sealed for a good year... the harp of Moshiach; learning Moshiach's teachings; the coming of Menachem who will comfort us... the King Moshiach; wonders... revealed miracles... a double portion; treasures... the completion and end of exile... the revelation of the Infinite Divine Light; "Humble ones, the time of your Redemption has arrived," wealth, materially and spiritually; "Jerusalem will dwell in open space," paratzta - 770; Your servant David will go forth; the ingathering of the exiles... acceptance of his sovereignty by the people; Rebbe - Rosh B'nei Yisrael; peace... a new song... Moshiach's shofar... unity of the Torah, unity of the Jewish people, unity of the land of Israel; Resurrection of the Dead... "A new Torah will come from Me" □