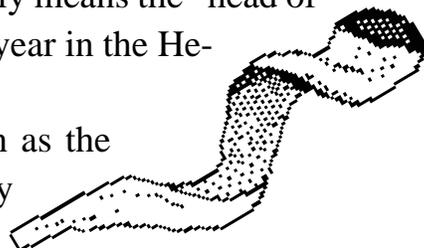


רֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

Rosh HaShanah - Yom Teruah

Coming soon are the Fall Feasts listed for us in Leviticus 23. The first of these Festivals is Rosh HaShanah, which literally means the “head of the year.” It is the beginning of the civil year in the Hebrew calendar.

Rosh HaShanah is biblically known as the Feast of Trumpets or Yom Teruah (the Day of the Trumpet sound). When you hear the word “trumpet” you might think of some metal or brass trumpet you have seen before. While there are different types of trumpets spoken of in the Bible, the one connected to the feast of Rosh HaShanah is the “shofar”, better known as a ram’s horn. A series of shofar blasts marks the arrival of Rosh HaShanah and gives it a solemn beginning.



Many traditions have attached themselves to Rosh HaShanah over the years. The first of these traditions is called “Tashlich” (from the verb *שלה*, “to throw”). On the afternoon of the first day many will gather near a flowing body of water and cast bread crumbs or rocks into it symbolizing the casting of sin into the depths as mentioned in the Prophet Micah (7:19).

A second tradition is to send cards to those who are friends wishing them *לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתִּיבוּ*, *l'shanah tova tikateivu*, “may you be inscribed in the book of life for a good year.” Jewish tradition teaches that every year at Rosh HaShanah the book of life is opened and a person’s good deeds are compared with the evil deeds they have done. If there are more good deeds than bad then that person’s name is written for another year in the book of life, but if the evil deeds outnumber the good then they are left out of the book of life. The Bible, however, teaches that one’s name is written in the book of life through faith in Yeshua the Messiah, not by doing good things. We live righteously because we have been made new by HaShem, and because we love Him.

The third tradition of Rosh HaShanah is to prepare special foods such as apple slices dipped in honey (in hopes of a “sweet new year”), round challah bread (to remember that this day emphasizes that Adonai is our King, and the round bread symbolic of His crown, as well as the beginning again of the festival, yearly cycle), and sweet cakes (for the joy of the day).