

אָלוּל The Month of

יום כּפּוּר to ראש חודש אָלוּל From

The period of forty days between ראש חודש אָלוּל and יום כּפּוּר is the best time for doing תּשׁוּבָה. Even though Hashem accepts our תּשׁוּבָה at any time during the year, He is even more willing to accept our תּשׁוּבָה at this time. Therefore we must look very carefully at the מְצוּת we have done both בֵּין אָדָם לְהַבְרֹוּ and בֵּין אָדָם לְמַקּוֹ-ם.

תּשׁוּבָה The Stages of Doing

There are three main stages of doing תּשׁוּבָה:

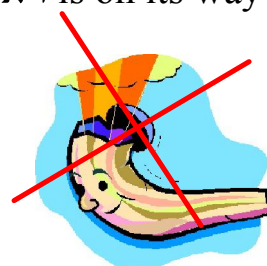
- הַרְטָה עַל הָעֲבָר - (Charatah Al He'Avar) - Feeling bad for having sinned;
- וִידוּי - (Vidui) - Confessing out loud what a person has done;
- קַבְלָה עַל הָעֲתִיד - (Kabalah Al He'Atid) - Deciding never to repeat the sin.



אָלוּל During שׁוֹפָר Blowing the

From the second day of ראש חודש אָלוּל the שׁוֹפָר is blown every day at the end of שְׁחֵרִית. This reminds people that ראש השנה is on its way and that it is time to do תּשׁוּבָה.

The שׁוֹפָר is not
blown on שַׁבָּת.



It is also not blown the day before ראש השנה.

Since it is a מְנַהֵג to blow the שׁוֹפָר during אָלוּל no בְּרַכָּה is said, but on ראש השנה itself a בְּרַכָּה is said because then it is not a מְנַהֵג but a מְצוּה.

סְלִיחוֹת Saying

On the last Sunday in אָלוּל we start to say the סְלִיחוֹת prayers every day until ראש השנה.

If ראש השנה falls on a Monday or Tuesday, סְלִיחוֹת are said for an extra week, beginning with the previous Sunday.

Instead of saying סְלִיחוֹת for the first time on Sunday morning it is customary to say the first סְלִיחוֹת on מוֹצָאֵי שַׁבָּת. On the following days they are said before שְׁחֲרִית.

What Are סְלִיחוֹת?

סְלִיחוֹת are special prayers in which we say וְיָדוּי (confession of sins) and ask Hashem to forgive us for our bad behaviour over the past year, and to bless us for goodness in the coming new year.

It is best to say Selichot with a מְנַיֵן, but if this is not possible a person can say them alone. However, a person davening by himself should not say the י"ג מִידוֹת הַרְחָמִים (the 13 merciful attributes of Hashem), for these may only be said with a מְנַיֵן.

עֶרֶב ראש השנה

The Day Before The Holiest Days Of The Year

The סְלִיחוֹת which are said on עֶרֶב ראש השנה contain many more תְּפִלוֹת (prayers) and פְּיוּטִים (religious poems) than the סְלִיחוֹת said during the previous days, so we have to get up even earlier on עֶרֶב ראש השנה to get to shul on time!

The שופר is not sounded on ראש השנה.

It is common in most shuls to perform התרת נדרים (Hatarat Nedarim) straight after שחרית. *(This will be explained below)*

A person should give more צדקה than usual throughout ראש השנה.

Everyone should try to have a bath or shower and a haircut, before mid-day if possible, in honour of ראש השנה.

Clothing that is to be worn on ראש השנה should be cleaned.

An effort should be made by everybody to become purified before The Day Of Judgement by immersing in a מקוה (mikveh) on ראש השנה.

It is a good idea to look through the מחזור of Rosh Hashonah in order to learn a little about the long and difficult תפילות of the day.

התרת נדרים - Hatarat Nedarim

This is a way of cancelling any vows or promises that may have been made in the past year but have not been kept.

A person gathers together three (sometimes ten) men to make a בית דין (Bet Din) - court - then declares to them that any past or future vows or promises should be cancelled and considered meaningless.

Exercise 1

Answer the following questions with full sentences and writing any Hebrew in script.

Example question:

During which forty-day period is Hashem most willing to accept our teshuvah?

Answer: The forty days between Rosh Chodesh Ellul and
 Yom Kippur. ×
 Hashem is most willing to accept our teshuvah during
 the forty day period between Rosh Chodesh Ellul and
 Yom Kippur. ×
 Hashem is most willing to accept our תשובה during
 the forty day period between ראש חודש אלול and
 יום כיפור. ✓

1. What are מצוות בין אדם למקום-ם ?
2. What are מצוות בין אדם לחברו ?
3. Give the Hebrew names of the three main stages of doing teshuvah and explain what each one means.
4. Why do we blow the shofar during Ellul?
5. What is the difference between a מנהג and a מצוה?
6. If Rosh Hashanah were to fall on a Monday or Tuesday, when would we begin to say selichot?
7. Why do we need to get up especially early on Erev Rosh Hashanah?
8. Why do you think it is good to give more צדקה than usual on Erev Rosh Hashanah?
9. What is the meaning of the words התרת נדרים ?
10. Write your own פיוט - religious poem - in which you first ask Hashem to forgive you for your עברות and then ask Him for a good new year.

THE DIFFERENT NAMES OF ראש השנה

Illustration Illustrate each name with a suitable picture	Name	Meaning	Reason for Name Select the appropriate descriptions for these boxes from below the table
	ראש השנה	H___ of the ___r	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	יום הדין	The Day of J_____t	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	יום הזכרון	The Day of R_____e	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	יום תרועה	The Day of B_____g	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Write the following four descriptions into the correct boxes above

- ❖ On this day, Hashem judges all the people of the world, Jew and non-Jew alike.
- ❖ _____ (write in the correct name) is the first day of the Jewish calendar year.
- ❖ The Shofar is sounded on this holy day.
- ❖ Hashem recalls the good and evil actions that everyone has done during the previous year.



-ראש השנה-

Two Days of ראש השנה for Everyone



ראש השנה is celebrated on the first and second days of תשרי.

Even though the other ימים טובים are celebrated outside ארץ ישראל for two days and inside ארץ ישראל for only one day, ראש השנה is celebrated everywhere, even in ארץ ישראל, for two days.

When Can ראש השנה Never Fall?

The first day of ראש השנה can never occur on a **Sunday**, a **Wednesday** or a **Friday**.

Our Rabbis have given us the phrase

ראש

is Rosh Hashanah

אד"ו

Sunday
Wednesday
or Friday

לא

Not on

to help us remember this.

Exercise 2

1. In the table on page 6 illustrate each name of ראש השנה with a different picture.

2. Put a tick in the box next to the correct statement:

(a) ראש השנה is celebrated one day in Israel but two days outside Israel.

(b) ראש השנה is celebrated for one day in *and* outside of Israel.

(c) All over the world ראש השנה is two days long, even in ארץ ישראל.

3. The second day of ראש השנה *can be on a Monday*

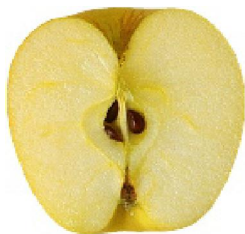
The first day of ראש השנה *cannot be on Shabbat*

The second day of ראש השנה *can be on a Thursday*

The first day of ראש השנה *can be on a Wednesday*

At the moment the above sentences are all wrong. Put the different halves together to make four correct statements. Write them out in full.

4. Write the phrase לא אדון ראש in large, colourful, carefully and attractively designed letters. Give a translation in a similar way to how we have done underneath the Hebrew.



מְנֵהָגִים During the Meal of the
ראש השנה



a) After we say **הַמוֹצֵיא** we dip the slice of challah into honey so that we may have a sweet year.

b) Between eating the challah and starting the meal we dip a slice of sweet apple into honey and say the brachah **בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ**. Along with the brachah we also say a special **יְהִי רְצוֹן** :



- **יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שְׁתַּחֲדֵשׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוֹקָה**

"May it be Your will that You (Hashem) renew upon us a good and sweet year."

c) During the meal it is customary to eat from the head of a ram or fish. This is usually eaten by the head of the household but others can eat it too. By eating from a head we are saying that we wish we may always be at 'the head' rather than at 'the tail'.



d) There will often be a part of the meal containing carrots, such as 'tzimmes'. The Yiddish word for carrots is MERIN which can also mean MULTIPLY : we ask Hashem to help us increase our mitzvot, and to multiply our people.

e) Many people eat other symbolic foods such as pomegranates, pumpkins, fenugreeks, leeks and dates. These foods grow quickly and symbolize abundance for the coming year.

Since these foods are not being eaten as part of the meal but rather for their spiritual meaning, a **בְּרָכָה רֵאשׁוֹנָה** (a brachah said before eating or drinking) should be said before eating them.



-ראש השנה -

Saying שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ The Second Night

Since there are different opinions regarding whether שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ needs to be said on the second night of ראש השנה, it is a good idea to either wear a new garment or to have a new fruit ready at the time of קידוש and הדלקת נרות. The fruit should be eaten straight after קידוש. However, even if one has neither a new garment nor a new fruit ready, שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ is still said.

What Happens When the Second Night of ראש השנה is also מוצאי שבת?

When the first day of ראש השנה is on שבת, then on מוצאי שבת it is necessary to say both קידוש (for the second night of יום טוב), and Havdalah (for the end of שבת).

We would then say the ברכות in the following order:

- 1) בּוֹרָא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן - the brachah over the wine, יין -
- 2) קידוש - the brachah of kiddush,
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ.....וְיוֹם הַזְכָּרוֹן
- 3) בּוֹרָא מְאוּרֵי הָאֵשׁ - the brachah of נר, which is said while looking at the Yom Tov candles;
- 4) הַבְּדִלָּה - the brachah of Havdalah, which ends with
הַמְּבַדִּיל בֵּין קֹדֶשׁ לְקֹדֶשׁ
- 5) שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ - The brachah of זמן.

This order of the different brachot can be remembered with the expression:

י ק נ ה " ז (YaKN'HaZ)
יין קידוש נר הַבְּדִלָּה זמן

Exercise 3

Answer the following questions with full sentences and writing any Hebrew in script.

Example question:

After which ברכה do we dip our challah into honey?

Answer: Hamotzi. ✘

We dip our challah into honey after saying hamotzi. ✘

We dip our challah into honey after saying

האונץא . ✓

1. Write out both the Hebrew and English of **the last three words** of the ברכה that we say upon eating the apple and honey.

2. Explain in your own words what you think we mean by:
'.....we wish we may always be at the head rather than at the tail.'

3. Why should a ברכה ראשונה be said upon eating symbolic foods during the meal?

4. Upon eating a pomegranate we say:

" יהי רצון מלפניך שנרבה זכויותינו כרימון "

'May it be Your will that our merits should increase like the [seeds of a] pomegranate.'

Draw the inside of a pomegranate showing its many pinky-red seeds separated into sections by yellow-white walls of pith.

5. Explain why it is a good idea to wear a new garment or have a new fruit ready during הדלקת נרות and קידוש on the second night of Rosh Hashanah.

6. When would it be necessary to say both kiddush and havdala at the same time?

7. After a normal Shabbat the final bracha of havdala ends with the words המבדיל בין קדש לחול . How does this bracha end on the second night of Rosh Hashanah?

8. Write the phrase יקנה"ז in large, colourful, carefully and attractively designed letters. Underneath each letter write the whole Hebrew word as we have done.

The Shofar

The שופר is sounded on both days of ראש השנה, unless the first day is on שבת. The שופר will then only be blown on the second day.

We blow the שופר to 'awaken' us from our sleep and remind us that it is time to change our ways, to realise what we have done wrong, be sorry, and decide not to sin any more.

It is best if the שופר is made from a ram's horn as a remembrance of the עקרה (the binding of יצחק). It should be curved, to show that we bow in shame before the great Judge.

Three different types of sound are blown:

תְּקִיעָה is one long blast, like a cry of pain or sadness,

שְׁבָרִים is three medium sounds, similar to groaning,

תְּרוּעָה is nine short notes, as if whimpering.

All together, one hundred blasts are blown each day of ראש השנה, and they are blown in three different groups:

תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
(תִּשְׂר"ת)

תְּקִיעָה שְׁבָרִים תְּקִיעָה
(תִּש"ת)

תְּקִיעָה תְּרוּעָה תְּקִיעָה
(תִּר"ת)

-ראש השנה -

שופר ברכות on Blowing the

Before blowing the shofar the בעל תוקע (the person who blows the שופר) says two ברכות:

- 1) ברוך - - - העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו לשמע קול שופר
- 2) ברוך - - - העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

While reciting the ברכות the בעל תוקע should have in mind that he is being מוציא (fulfilling the obligations of..) the people listening to the שופר.

The people listening should pay close attention to the ברכות with the intention in their minds to be יוצא (to fulfil their obligation) .

Therefore, a person should not be מפסיק , interrupt the brochos, by saying ברוך הוא וברוך שמו. This is only said when a person does not need to be יוצא (fulfil his own obligation) through listening and responding with אמן to another person's ברכה.

The first 30 תרועות - blasts - which are blown before מוסף are called תקיעות מיושב (the sitting blows). The following 70 which are blown during and after חזרת הש"ץ (the chazzan's repetition of the עמידה) are called תקיעות מעומד (the standing).

Exercise 4

Answer the following questions with full sentences and writing any Hebrew in script.

Example question:

When would the shofar only be blown on the second day of Rosh Hashana?

Answer: If the first day was on Shabbat. ✕
 The shofar would only be blown on the second day if the first day was on Shabbat. ✕
 The שופר would only be blown on the second day of ראש השנה if the first day was on שבת ✓

1. Explain what we mean when we say the shofar is blown to 'awaken us from our sleep'.
2. How does a ram's horn remind us of the עקדה ?
- 3(a) What human sound is a תקיעה like?
- (b) What human sound are the שברים like?
- (c) What human sound is the תרועה like?
4. How many blasts are blown each day of Rosh Hashana ?
5. Which note does the ר in תשר"ת and תר"ת stand for?
- 6 (a) What should the בעל תוקע have in mind when he is blowing the shofar ?
 (b) What should the people listening have in mind?
7. When may ברוך הוא וברוך שמו be said in response to the first words of someone else's beracha?
8. What does ברוך הוא וברוך שמו mean?
9. When are the first 30 blasts of the shofar blown?
10. What is the meaning of חזרת השף ?
11. Draw a בעל תוקע standing next to the חזן and blowing a שופר , with the congregation paying close attention. Remember, each man, the Baal Tokeah and Chazan, will be wearing a long white kittel under his tallit.

The Reading of the Torah on ראש השנה

On both days of ראש השנה two ספרי תורה are removed from the ארון הקודש.

On the first day we read from פְּרִשֶׁת וַיֵּרָא (בראשית: פָּרָק כ"א) about the birth of יִצְחָק. The הַפְּטָרָה is taken from the beginning of סֵפֶר שְׁמוּאֵל (The Book of Shmuel), which tells of Shmuel's birth.

Both שָׂרָה, the mother of יִצְחָק, and חַנָּה, the mother of שְׁמוּאֵל, had their prayers for a child answered on ראש השנה.

On the second day we also read from פְּרִשֶׁת וַיֵּרָא (בראשית: פָּרָק כ"ב) this time about יִצְחָק, when אֲבִרְהָם אָבִינוּ put יִצְחָק on the מִזְבֵּחַ and bound him as a sacrifice.

We pray that through the great merit of אֲבִרְהָם, who was ready to carry out any command of ה', Hashem should grant us only good for the coming year.

The הַפְּטָרָה is taken from יְרֵמְיָהוּ and speaks about the final rebuilding and redemption of Israel.

On both days the second סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה is used for מִפְטִיר. פְּרִשֶׁת פִּינְחָס is read from this (בְּמִדְבָר פָּרָק כ"ט א-ו) which discusses the קְרָבָנוֹת brought on ראש השנה.

Five people are called up to the reading from the first סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה. One more person is called up to מִפְטִיר and he can be a כֹּהֵן, לֵוִי or יִשְׂרָאֵל.

If the first day of ראש השנה is on שֶׁבַע seven men are called up to the reading from the first סֵפֶר.

It is customary to give an עֲלִיָּה to the person who will be blowing the שׁוֹפָר and another to the chazzan who will be leading מוֹסָף.

-ראש השנה-

The ראש השנה (additional) Service of מוסף

The musaph service of ראש השנה consists of nine ברכות.

The first three ברכות and the last three ברכות are the same as those said during the year.

The **fourth** ברכה has קדושת היום (*Holiness of the Day*) and מלכות (about Hashem's *Kingship*) together, the **fifth** ברכה is זכרונות (*Remembrances*) and the **sixth** ברכה is שופרות (about sounding the Shofar).

מלכות

In the ברכה of מלכות we first mention the holiness of the day and the קרבנות of Rosh Hashana. We then speak of the fact that ה' created everything that exists, that His kingdom is the entire universe, and we say that we accept forever His reign over us.

זכרונות

In the ברכה of זכרונות we say that we believe Hashem is always looking after everything He has created. We also say that Hashem remembers all of mankind's actions and nothing is hidden from Him. We believe that Hashem will reward or punish according to our actions. In the pesukim read in זכרונות there are examples of times when Hashem remembered people's actions. We ask Hashem to remember the great acts of faith of אברהם and יצחק at the עקבה when judging us.

שופרות

In this section we accept the duties placed on us in the Torah. We speak of מתן תורה (the giving of the Torah) which was accompanied with thunder, lightning and mighty shofar blasts. We pray for the final redemption, which will be announced by משיח blowing the שופר.

Exercise 5

Answer the following questions with full sentences and writing any Hebrew in script..

Example question:

On which day of ראש השנה do we remove two ספרי תורה from the ארון הקדש ?

Answer: Both days ✕

We remove two ספרי תורה from the ark on both days of Rosh Hashana. ✕

We remove two ספרי תורה from the ארון הקדש on both days of ראש השנה ✓

- 1(a) What do we read about in the Torah on the first day of ראש השנה ?
- (b) What do we read about in the Haftarah on the first day of ראש השנה ?
- (c) Explain how these two stories are connected to ראש השנה.

- 2(a) What do we read about in the Torah on the second day of ראש השנה ?
- (b) What do we read about in the Haftarah on the second day of ראש השנה ?

3. What do we read about in the maftir of both days?

4. Tick the correct boxes:

If the first day of Rosh Hashana falls on Shabbat, five men are called up to the first sefer instead of seven.

Seven men are called up to the first sefer instead of five, when the first day of Rosh Hashona is on Shabbat.

Except for when the first day of Rosh Hashona falls on Shabbat five men are called up to the first sefer on both days.

The person called up for maftir must be a כהן .

The חזן and בעל תוקעה are often honoured with an aliyah.

5. How many berachot are there in מוסף of Rosh Hashana?

- 6 (a) What is the meaning of the words קדושת היום ?
- (b) What is the meaning of the word מלכיות ?
- (c) What is the meaning of the word זכרונות ?
- (d) What is the meaning of the word שופרות ?

7. Which of מלכיות , זכרונות or שופרות do you think is most important? Explain the reason for your choice.

תְּשַׁלַּיִךְ Tashlich

It is a common מְנַהֵג to go to a river or stream after מְנַחֵה on the first day of ראש השנה. The תְּשַׁלַּיִךְ prayer is said here. When the first day of ראש השנה is on שַׁבַּת then תְּשַׁלַּיִךְ is performed on the second day.

Each person shakes his pockets empty three times as if he is getting rid of any sins. We also remind ourselves of what our Rabbis tell us happened when אַבְרָהָם went to bind יִצְחָק as a sacrifice on the day of ראש השנה: the שָׁטָן appeared before them in the form of a large river, and when they entered the water it rose up as far as their necks. אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ cried out to Hashem:

"L-rd of the universe, the waters have reached life itself. If either I or my son יִצְחָק drown who will tell the world about You?" Hashem then firmly told the river to go back down and they were saved.

We therefore go near seas or rivers to remember their merit in offering their lives in fulfilling Hashem's commandments.



ראש השנה Sleep on

We try not to take naps during the daytime on both days of ראש השנה. Rather, we should spend our time studying תּוֹרָה related to the day, such as מִשְׁנֵה ראש השנה, דִּינִים from the עֲרוּךְ or laws regarding תְּשׁוּבָה from הַלְכוֹת תְּשׁוּבָה by the רַמְבַּ"ם. It is also proper to recite chapters of תְּהִלִּים.

If a person feels tired he may have a brief sleep during the afternoon if that will help him to concentrate during מְנַחֵה.

-ראש השנה -

ערוב תבשילין - Eruv Tavshilin

Sometimes the first day of ראש השנה falls on Thursday. When that happens Thursday and Friday are יום טוב days followed by שבת. This creates a problem with preparing for שבת.

Even though we *are* permitted to cook on יום טוב, we may only cook food that is needed for that day. We may not prepare food on the first day that we will only need on the second day. It is also not permitted to prepare food on either day of יום טוב that will only be needed on שבת. Also, food prepared on Wednesday may have become spoiled by שבת, so what can we do?

In order to solve this problem our Rabbis created the idea of making an ערוב תבשילין on Erev Rosh Hashana. If the first day of Rosh Hashana fell on Thursday the ערוב תבשילין would be made on Wednesday, and we would then be permitted to make our שבת preparations on the Friday - the second day of ראש השנה.

The ערוב is made up of one baked food (usually מצה or חלה) and one cooked food (a hard boiled egg, a piece of fish or meat). Before dark on ערב יום טוב a member of the household puts away the challa or matza with the egg or piece of fish or meat. Each piece of food should be the size of a כזית (kazayit - the size of an olive, but larger than most olives we know nowadays), and the two foods are eaten on שבת.

Before putting away the ערוב תבשילין (which literally means 'mixture of cooked foods') in a safe place a ברכה is said:

ברוך - - - העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על מצות ערוב

After saying the בְּרָכָה the following paragraph is said:

"Through this עֲרוֹב we shall be permitted to bake, cook, keep warm, light a fire - by contact with another fire since we may not light a new fire on Yom Tov - and perform whatever we are in need of on יום טוב for the coming שַׁבָּת. This is for us and for all those who live in this city."

The מִצָּה or חֻלָּה is used on שַׁבָּת as part of the מִשְׁנֵה לֶחֶם , the מִצָּה of having two loaves of bread for each שַׁבָּת meal. In this way we add another מִצָּה to the מִצָּה we have already performed with this food.

The person making the עֲרוֹב should have the intention that other people will benefit from it.

-ראש השנה-

Exercise 6

Answer the following questions with full sentences..

Example question:

When is the תשליך prayer said?

Answer: After mincha on the first day of Rosh Hashana. ×
Tashlich is said after mincha on the first day of
Rosh Hashana. ×
תשליך is said after מנחה on the first day of
ראש השנה ✓

1. Where is תשליך performed?
2. Of which story do we remind ourselves by visiting such a place? Write the story in your own words.
3. What do we do during תשליך to show that we want to get rid of our sins?
4. We should try not to have a nap during the day of Rosh Hashana. How should we spend our time instead?
5. What problem do we have regarding food preparation when the first day of Rosh Hashana falls on a Thursday?
6. Explain how the עירוב תבשילין is made.
7. Write down the last four words of the ברכה we say upon putting away the עירוב תבשילין.

-ראש השנה -

Rabbi Saadia Gaon on תְּקִיעַת שׁוֹפָר - the Sounding of the Shofar

Rabbi Saadia Gaon taught us ten symbolic meanings in תְּקִיעַת שׁוֹפָר - the Sounding of the Shofar:

1. The day of Rosh Hashana marks the beginning of Creation, when Hashem created the world and became its King. At the beginning of a king's reign it is customary to sound trumpets to proclaim the rise of the new king to sovereignty throughout the realm. In the same way, we accept the sovereignty of Hashem over ourselves - He is our מֶלֶךְ on Rosh Hashana.
2. Rosh Hashana is the first of the יְמֵי תְּשׁוּבָה, the ten days of Teshuva, and the שׁוֹפָר is sounded to proclaim and to warn: whoever wishes to do תְּשׁוּבָה, let him do תְּשׁוּבָה, if not, let him not complain later. This is the way of kings - first they forewarn the people with decrees and whoever takes no notice has no reason to complain.
3. The שׁוֹפָר is sounded to remind us of when we were standing at הַר סִינַי, of which the תּוֹרָה says: **וַיְהִי קוֹל הַשֹּׁפָר הוֹלֵךְ וְחֹזֵק מְאֹד!** (שְׁמוֹת י"ט: י"ט)
The sound of the Shofar became stronger and stronger! (Shemot 19, 19)
We sound the shofar so that we might accept upon ourselves what our fathers accepted when they said, **כָּל אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר ה' נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע!** (שְׁמוֹת כ"ד: ז)
"All that Hashem has said we shall do and we shall learn! (Shemot 24, 7)
4. The נְבִיאִים (Prophets) were given messages from Hashem to warn the Jewish People to improve their ways. The שׁוֹפָר is sounded to remind us of the words of the נְבִיאִים, their calls to the Jewish People to do תְּשׁוּבָה, which were compared to the sounding of the שׁוֹפָר.
5. The שׁוֹפָר is sounded to remind us of the destruction of the בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ - the Temple in Yerushalayim - and the trumpet blasting of the enemy attack. When we hear the sound of the שׁוֹפָר we are to pray to Hashem for the rebuilding of the בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ.
6. תְּקִיעַת שׁוֹפָר reminds us of יִצְחָק, the binding of יִצְחָק, who offered his life to Hashem, but a ram was slaughtered in his place. We also offer our lives to ה', through practising תּוֹרָה and מִצְוֹת, so that He may remember us for the good.
7. When we hear the sound of the שׁוֹפָר we are to feel fear and trembling and we are to humble ourselves before our Creator, for this is the effect of the שׁוֹפָר.
8. It makes us anticipate, in fear, the great Day of Judgement in the future, when the שׁוֹפָר will be blown.
9. It awakens our faith in the future gathering of the Jewish People from all over the world, when the שׁוֹפָר will be sounded, and makes us yearn* for it.

*want it and look forward to it very much

- 10 It recalls our faith in the future resurrection of the dead, when the שׁוֹפָר will be blown.

Now illustrate these ten meanings from Rabbi Saadia Gaon in the boxes below:
(Use your imagination!)

1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8
9	10

-ראש השנה -

The ראש השנה Greeting

On the first night of ראש השנה, after מעריב (the Evening Service), we greet each other with the following words:

לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה

to women or girls

תִּכְתְּבִי
וְתִחְתְּמִי

to men or boys

תִּכְתְּבוּ
וְתִחְתְּמוּ

to a woman or girl

תִּכְתְּבִי
וְתִחְתְּמִי

to a man or boy

תִּכְתְּב
וְתִחְתְּם

which means:

*“For a good year may you be
inscribed and sealed.”*

We also say, simply, “שָׁנָה טוֹבָה” - “a good year”

as well as “שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וְיָמֵינוּ שְׂמֵחָה” - “a good and sweet year”

Each Jew should greet his / her friend with a warm blessing on the first night of Rosh Hashana. Displaying friendship towards each other is an important part of feeling the holiness of the day. We must always remember that Hashem is very concerned about the way we act towards each other as well as the way we perform more ritual מצוות such as תפילה, prayer.

It is very interesting that the Rabbis teach us the root of the word “תְּרוּעָה” - “Shofar blast” (the main Mitzva of Rosh Hashana) - is the same as that of “רְעוּת” - “friendship.” (Rashi on Bemidbar: 23, 21)

This is because it is only when Hashem sees us acting pleasantly and kindly towards each other (displaying רְעוּת) that He will listen to our Shofar blasts (תְּרוּעוֹת) and have mercy on us. (Rabbi Aharon of Karlin)



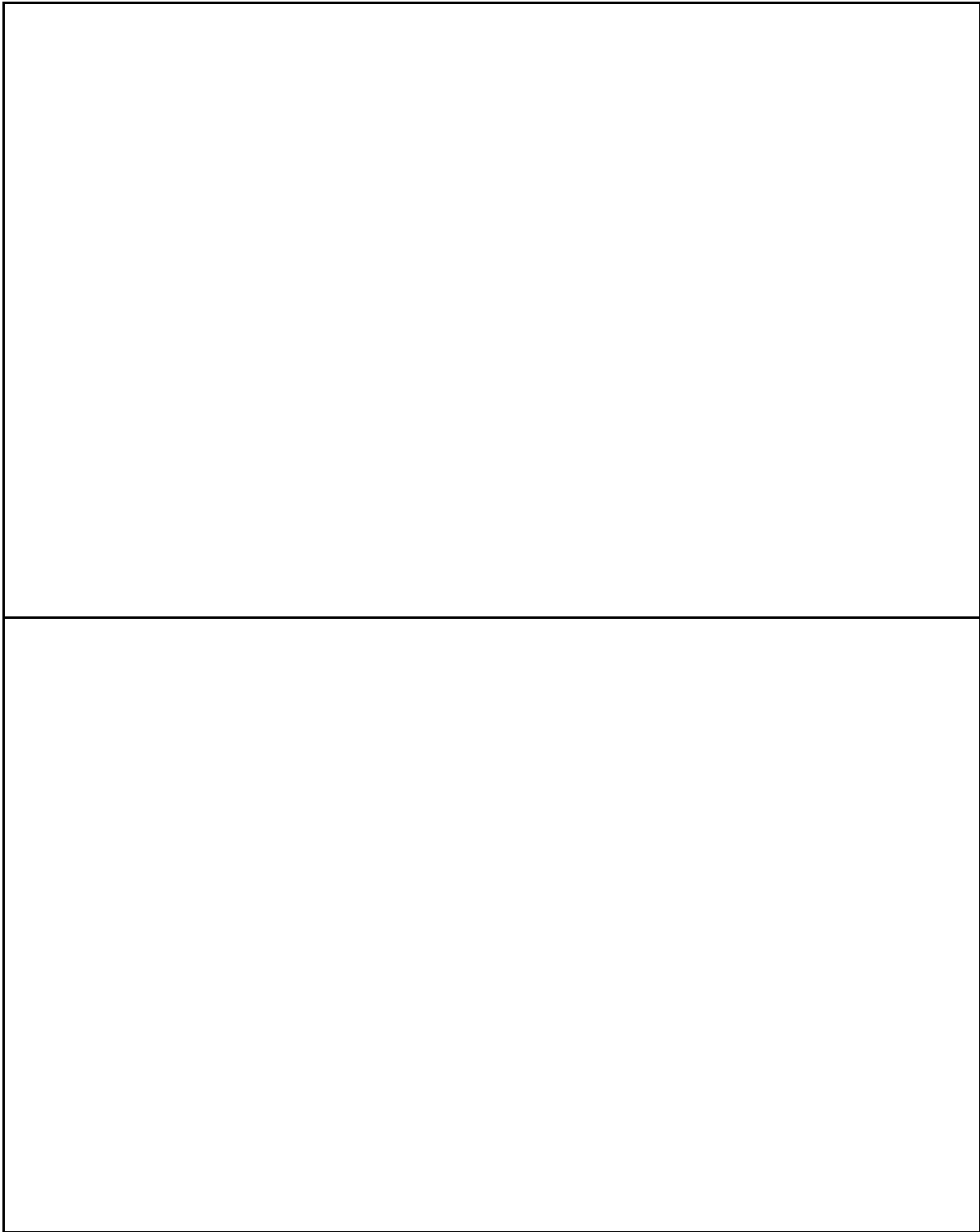
The Rabbis teach us that three books are opened before the Heavenly Court on Rosh Hashana. Those who are definitely צְדִיקִים (righteous people) are immediately inscribed and sealed for life. People who are unquestionably רְשָׁעִים (wicked) are immediately inscribed and sealed for death. Those whose good and bad actions are equally balanced wait for their final judgement until יום כּפּוּר. Most of us fall into the third category, so we must make a very special effort at this time to tip the balance in our favour!

Note that “for life” and “for death” refer not to our physical existence in this world but to everlasting life in עוֹלָם הַבָּא - “the World to Come.”



(Adapted from the Artscroll Machzor for Rosh Hashana)

Design a ראש השנה card for your parents in the outline below then cut it out and keep it hidden until יום טוב. Include one or two of the greetings we have learnt about. It is also common to ask to be forgiven for anything you have done to upset the person you are sending to. Ideas for drawings: shofar / weighing scales / apple and honey / pomegranates / machzor.

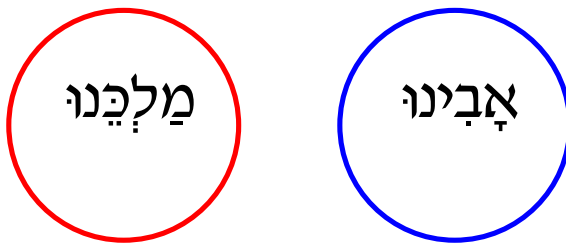
A large rectangular outline divided into two horizontal sections, intended for drawing and writing a card. The top section is approximately 40% of the total height, and the bottom section is approximately 60%. The lines are solid black.

אָבִינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ

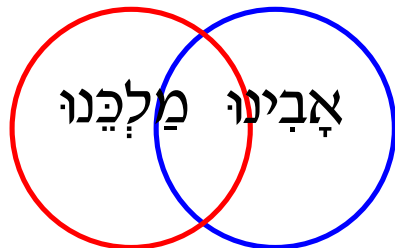
Our Father, our King!

This תְּפִלָּה is said a great deal at this time of year. It is recited from ראש השנה all the way through to the end of יום כפור. Let us try to understand the meaning of just this phrase. Look at the following diagrams and discuss each one in turn to try to understand their meanings. Then, try to answer the questions below.

1.



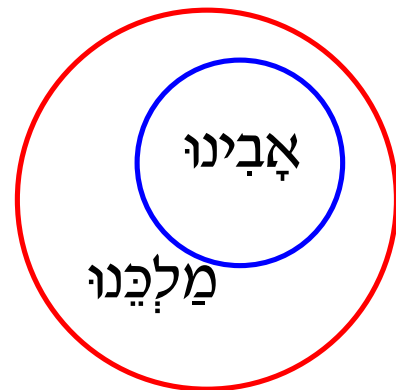
2.



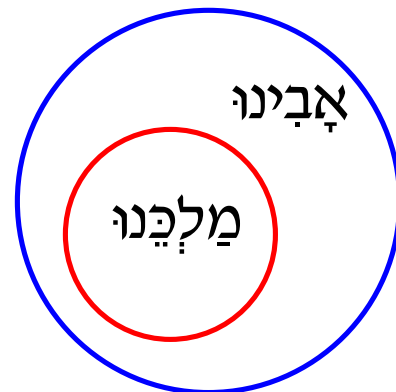
3.



4.



5.



Questions

1. How can Hashem be both אָבִינוּ (our Father) and מֶלְכֵנוּ (our King) at the same time?
2. Compare this 'אָבִינוּ מֶלְכֵנוּ' idea with how your parents are: who is more אָבִינוּ, who is more מֶלְכֵנוּ, do they ever switch their roles, etc.
3. Which of these diagrams best represents how Hashem has both aspects to His Nature?

-ראש השנה-

” ותשובה ותפלה וצדקה
מעבירין את רע הגזירה! ”

“..but Teshuvah, Tefilla and Tzedaka
remove the evil of the decree!”

In our תפילות on ראש השנה we say the words above, which indicate that if we do these three activities we can actually influence ה' to remove the harshness of what He may have decreed for us.

Let us think about how this can really be!

First, take each one in turn.

1. How do you think תשובה can remove the harshness of Hashem's decree?
What happens when we do תשובה that could lead to Hashem being influenced in this way?

2. How could תפלה remove the harshness of Hashem's decree?
Why would תפלה have such a power to do this?

3. How could צדקה remove the harshness of Hashem's decree?
Is צדקה different in any way from תשובה and תפלה?

Questions for discussion

~ Which of these מצוות are בין אדם למקום and which are בין אדם לחברו?

~ Which of these two types of מצוה do you think would have more power to remove the harshness of Hashem's decree?