



A STUDENT'S GUIDE

TO HIGH HOLY DAYS

ROSH HASHANAH EDITION

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a way for students on campus to access further information about Rosh Hashanah and different ways to celebrate the festival. In a time where accessing communal facilities and face-to-face contact might be more difficult than in previous years, this is an easy and accessible way to celebrate the High Holidays and to engage positively and in new ways with your own Judaism.

COMING TOGETHER FOR THE FESTIVALS

Across the country, many local communities will be issuing strict guidance on how services will be run on the High Holidays. There will be different services throughout the days, and different ways of accessing these services. Some synagogues are sadly not opening to full capacity, so when looking to join a service for the High Holidays at your local synagogue, whether in person or digitally, research how they are delivering services and get in contact with them on how you would be able to attend. We are also able to help guide you to a synagogue if you are finding it challenging. Additionally, bringing the J-Soc together for a service or activity during the High Holy Days is a great way to celebrate as a group.



ROSH HASHANAH

The High Holy Days begin with Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, starting on the 1st Tishrei.

Literally translated, Rosh Hashanah means the 'Head of the Year' as on this day, it is said that this is when creation began. This time of year is when G-d balances a person's good deeds and bad deeds, to

evaluate how their next year will pan out. Rosh Hashanah also marks the beginning of the 10 days of repentance, which ends on Yom Kippur.



THE SHOFAR

It is a mitzvah to hear the Shofar on both mornings of Rosh Hashanah, thus making the shofar a key part of the service. Made from a ram's horn, the Shofar is said to signify the ram that Abraham sacrificed instead of his son, as this is the story that we read on Rosh Hashanah. For some, the shofar symbolises a crying noise, as a reminder for us to repent for the sins



of the previous year. There are 4 sounds for the Shofar – Tekiah (one long Note), Shevarim, (3 broken notes) Teruah (9 short sharp notes), and Tekiah Gedolah (one long note, much longer than the first).

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

TESHUVA - REPENTANCE

On Rosh Hashanah, it is great to discuss Teshuva and the idea of repentance. Although this can be done all year round, on High Holy Days we ask for forgiveness and reflect on the previous year. While mistakes happen, Teshuva allows a time for us to reflect and try to prevent them from happening again. Although Teshuva is said to translate to Repentance, it actually translates to 'return' – return to a path of goodness for the new year. There are said to be four steps of atonement:

1. **Recognise and Regret** – Recognise that what you are doing or have done is wrong
2. **Stop** – Immediately stop this action
3. **Apologise** - Vocalise this, whether to G-d or the person if possible
4. **Resolve** – Commit to not doing the action again

- Looking at the past year, what is something that you have regretted?
- What is something that you wish you could apologise for?
- What is something you wish you could apologise to yourself for? It is also important to be kind to yourself.
- What steps could you take to ensure that you learn from these mistakes?

NEW YEAR, NEW ME

New year, new start, new worries. Starting university for the first time, or going back to campus can be quite daunting, particularly now! So sitting down and beginning to look forward to the new year can be quite useful. Evaluating the year ahead and what you would like to achieve at university gives you clear goals and motivation. As Rosh Hashanah falls at the beginning of the academic time, this is a great time to do this.

- What in the past have you achieved? What are 3 achievements you have been proud of in the past?
- What are 3 things you seek to improve for your future?
- Break the habit! Set yourself these goals to help improve your year ahead.
- Maybe look further at how you can alter your year ahead and help give back to those that have helped you. This could include giving back to the community.
- You can look within your J-Soc and community about how you collectively can change the year ahead to make it even better than the previous. This is a great time to prepare for the year and see what great things you would like to do!

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

PARASHAH

These are the summaries of the Rosh Hashanah Torah Readings from Genesis 21:1-34; Genesis 22:1-24

Day 1 of Rosh Hashanah

Sarah and Abraham are blessed by God and are given a Son named Isaac (Yitzchak). Abraham is 100 years old and Sarah is 90. Isaac is circumcised at the age of 8 Days.

Day 2 of Rosh Hashanah

God Commands Abraham to sacrifice his son in Jerusalem. Isaac is bound and placed on the alter. Abraham raises to slaughter, however God called him to stop, saying it was a test. A ram was offered in his place.

- Abraham made a difficult decision, why do you think he agreed?
- Sometimes our relationship with G-D feels like a parent/child relationship. It is not always simple. What does this story teach us about our relationship with G-d?
- At what points in the year have you felt tested, or pushed to your limits?
- How have you coped with this?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

On Rosh Hashanah, food holds a lot of symbolism. Below, are the foods that are particularly important on Rosh Hashanah and simple recipes to make them at university!

FISH/RAMS HEAD

On Rosh Hashanah, in some Seders it is tradition for the table to have a fish/ram's head, or the head of another kosher animal. Some will simply have a fish dish. This symbolises in a literal sense the 'Head' of the year, which is the literal translation of Rosh Hashanah. This is therefore a common feature at meals.

APPLE AND HONEY

We traditionally dip apple into honey to symbolise a sweet new year. Some also dip Challah into the honey as well.



APPLE JAM

It is part of the Iraqi tradition to make Apple Jam on Rosh Hashanah. To also follow this tradition, here is the recipe: In a large bowl, mix 2 pounds of red apples with 1-pound sugar and 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom. Cover and let sit overnight. The next day, transfer to a pot, bring to boil, remove foam, and cook on low heat until very tender. Add juice of one lemon at the end and then you have Apple Jam! Keep in the fridge once created.

DATES

Other than an apple and a pomegranate, it has become more common in some families to pick other 'new fruit' as another symbol of the new year. Other fruits include starfruit, lychee, longan, rambutan, or passionfruit – other fruits that have newly come into season around Rosh Hashanah. The dates are also significant as the Hebrew word for dates, "t'marim", evokes the word "tam"- 'to end'. Dates are also, much like pomegranates, one of the seven species of Israel.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

CARROTS

As well as other vegetables, some family tend to have carrots on the table to symbolise good fortune for the year ahead. Carrots are a good example of this as in Yiddish, they are called 'Mehren', which translates to 'Increase'. Carrots thus 'symbolise the desire for G-d to give us increased blessings for the new year and nullify any negative decrees against us.

POMEGRANATE

The pomegranate holds an abundance of seeds and is associated with the 613 Mitzvot (Commandments) in the Torah, serving as symbols of righteousness and fruitfulness. It is also said to be the first-of-the-season fruit, much like it is the first day of the new year. The pomegranate is a key feature of the Rosh Hashanah table for both Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews, due to the large symbolism it holds. Pomegranates are also one of the seven species of Israel. Not only for the Jewish religion are pomegranates important, but in Hinduism the pomegranate symbolises prosperity and fertility. In the Qur'an, pomegranates are named as one of the fruits that will grow in the gardens of paradise.



SQUASH

The traditional Mizrahi and Sephardi way is to fry chunks of pumpkin or squash and serve it dipped in sugar. You could also mix butternut squash chunks with honey, olive oil and kosher salt and roast in the oven at 180 degrees Celsius for about an hour, or until tender.

RECIPES

Here are some sweet treats that you can make on Rosh Hashanah, to help you have a Sweet New Year! These are easy to bake, with simple ingredients! All recipes can be used with gluten-free, dairy-free and vegan ingredients!

APPLE CRUMBLE



6 tart apples, peeled and sliced
1 cup sugar
½ cup oil
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 cup flour

1. Scatter sliced apples on 9-inch round or square greased baking pan.
2. For crumbed topping, mix together the sugar, oil, cinnamon, and flour.
3. Sprinkle evenly on top of apples.
4. Bake in a preheated 180° oven for one hour.
5. Serve warm or cold.

HONEY CAKE

| | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 3 Tbsps. margarine, softened | 3 eggs |
| 1 tsp. baking soda | 1 1/3 cups honey |
| 4 cups flour | 1 1/2 cups sugar |
| 1 tsp cinnamon | 1 cup strong black coffee |
| | 2 tsps. baking powder |

1. Preheat oven to 180°
2. Grease and flour a 9 by 13-inch cake pan.
3. In a large mixer bowl, beat eggs and honey together. Add sugar and mix again. Mix coffee with baking powder, and then add with margarine to the egg mixture. Add baking soda, flour, and cinnamon and beat together well.
4. Pour into greased cake pan. Bake for 55 minutes to an hour.
5. USE: 9 X 13-inch cake pan



ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

Apart from cooking delightful sweet treats and having great discussions within the J-Soc there are many other things that you could do!

TIKKUN OLAM (REPAIRING THE WORLD)

Tikkun Olam is the Jewish concept of giving back to the community and repairing the world step by step. Rosh Hashanah is a great time to give back to the community and volunteer with a local society or organisation. This could also include giving back to the planet, start recycling and other projects within your J-Soc. Whether this is active or preparing ideas that you could do throughout the year, Rosh Hashanah, as the beginning of the year, is a great time together and think about how to practice Tikkun Olam.



FRUIT PICKING

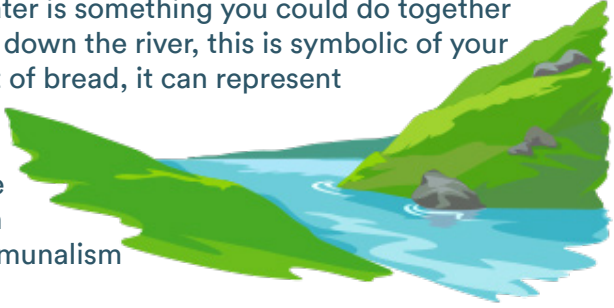
For those of you that are lucky enough to live near an orchard, apple picking and other fruit is a great way to get involved with the traditions of Rosh Hashanah, as well as bringing a sweet treat home! Picking fruit will also help you create a sweeter tasting apple pie and could also be a way to give back to the community through donating the fruit!



ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS

TASHLICH

Some tend to throw bread or other foods into a body of flowing water, to wash away sins, or 'cast off'; the definition of Tashlich. Throwing your sins away in a body of water is something you could do together as a J-Soc. As the bread flows down the river, this is symbolic of your sins flowing away. For each bit of bread, it can represent something from the past year that you would like to cast off. This is a great way to bring the community together, and even turn it into a day of cross-communalism and interfaith!



CREATING HOLIDAY CARDS



Feeling Creative? Make your own holiday cards to send to friends, family, or to a local community centre and its members. This is a way to give back to the people you care about and the community as well as bringing people closer together before the High Holy Days. If you don't have any paper or are doubting your creative talent, there are some great examples online or you can even you're your own digital, paperless cards (which are environmentally friendly too)!

Have a Sweet New Year!

Shanah Tovah u'metukah!

שנה טובה ומתוקה

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