

Welcoming Rosh Hashanah

It is customary, before the beginning of Rosh Hashanah, for each member of the household to contribute to some worthy cause.

“Happy are those who consider the poor.”

Eternal God, we hereby vow to fulfill the Mitzvah of Tzedakah as we begin this day of holiness. We shall not forget the words of Your prophet, who called us to share our bread with the hungry, to clothe the naked, and never to hide ourselves from our own kin.

May we, together with the whole House of Israel, be mindful of the needs of others, sharing with them the fruits of our labor, helping to sustain them in body and soul. For all, may Your promise be fulfilled: “Then shall your light blaze forth like the dawn, and your wounds shall quickly heal; your righteousness shall walk before you, the glory of the Lord shall follow you.”

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הדלקת הנרות

With the setting of this evening’s sun, united with Jews of every place and time, we proclaim a new year of hope. Lord of the universe, let Your light and Your truth come forth to lead us. These flames we kindle are a symbol of Your eternal flame: may they open our eyes to the good we must do, moving us to work for harmony and peace, and so making the world bright with Your presence.

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בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל (שַׁבָּת וְשָׁל) יוֹם טוֹב.

Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, by whose Mitzvot we are hallowed, who commands us to kindle the lights of (Shabbat and) Yom Tov.

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The parents bless the children

May God bless you and guide you. Be strong for the truth, charitable in your words, just and loving in your deeds. A noble heritage has been entrusted to you; guard it well.

For a boy

יְשׁוּבָה אֱלֹהִים בְּשָׂרָה, רִבְקָה, רָחֵל, וְלֵאָה.
יְשׁוּבָה אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכַמְנַשֶּׁה.

May God inspire you to live in the tradition of Ephraim and Menasheh, who carried forward the life of our people.

May God inspire you to live in the tradition of Sarah and Rebekah, Rachel and Leah, who carried forward the life of our people.

יְבָרֶכְךָ יי וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ,
יְאֵר יי פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וְיַחַנְנֶךָ,
יִשָּׂא יי פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וְיִשֶּׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord look kindly upon you and be gracious to you;
The Lord bestow His favor upon you and give you peace. Amen.

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There might now be a moment of silence, during which all present think of one another with blessing.

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Kiddush

The observance of Rosh Hashanah reminds us that all we say and do stands under judgment: our own and God's. It calls us to turn from old errors and failures, and to look ahead with fresh hope and determination.

Let us praise God with this symbol of joy, and give thanks for the goodness we have experienced during past year. May our worship on this day fill us with eagerness to embrace life and to hallow it. May the new year bring renewed strength to our people Israel, and peace to the world.

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Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה.

Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

Many eat a round Challah baked with raisins:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Blessed is the Lord, our God, Ruler of the universe, who causes bread to come forth from the earth.

An apple dipped in honey is eaten after saying:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the tree.

Then it is customary to add:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שֶׁתַּחֲדֹשׁ עֲלֵינוּ
שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה.

Lord our God and God of our people, may the new year be good for us, and sweet.

הַדְּלֻקַּת הַנְּרוֹת

The holiest day of the year is about to begin. Let us use it well. May it be for each one of us a day of renewal. May it help us to overcome what is evil in us, and to strengthen what is good. May it bring us closer to one another, and make us more loyal to our community, our faith, and our God. *

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Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, by whose Mitzvot we are hallowed, who commands us to kindle the lights of (Shabbat and) the Day of Atonement.

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