



Rosh Hashanah

September 22 – September 24

WHAT IS ROSH HASHANAH?

Rosh Hashanah, which means “Head of the Year,” marks the beginning of the Jewish New Year. It commemorates the anniversary of the creation of the world - specifically the sixth day, when humans were created. This sacred time encourages reflection, forgiveness, and setting intentions for the year ahead. Rosh Hashanah also begins the “Days of Awe,” a 10-day period of introspection and repentance that culminates in Yom Kippur, the holiest day in Judaism.

KEY TRADITIONS AND RITUALS

- **Tashlich Ceremony:** The Tashlich ceremony involves symbolically casting away sins from the past year by tossing breadcrumbs into flowing water such as a river, lake, or ocean. This act represents a spiritual cleansing and a fresh start for the new year.
- **Prayers and Services:** Services and prayers focus on the themes of judgment, repentance, and renewal. The prayers ask for forgiveness and express hope for being inscribed in the “Book of Life.”
- **Shofar Blowing:** The shofar, a ram’s horn, is blown up to 100 times during services to awaken the soul and inspire reflection.
- **Symbolic Foods:** Apples with honey welcome a sweet new year, round challah symbolizes life’s cycle, and pomegranates represent abundance and tradition.

COMMON GREETINGS

- Shanah Tovah (shah-NAH toe-VAH) – Good Year
- L’shanah tovah tikatevu (leh-sha-NAH to-VAH tee-kah-TEY-voo) – May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year

WAYS TO CELEBRATE AND LEARN

- **Attend Services:** Look for local or virtual events hosted by synagogues, cultural centers, or educational organizations.
- **Learn More:** Read articles, books, or watch videos that explain the origins and significance of Rosh Hashanah, including its connection to the creation of the world and the Days of Awe.
- **Reflect:** Engage in cheshbon hanefesh (CHESH-bone hah-NEH-fesh) an “accounting of the soul”, through journaling, meditation, or guided reflection.