

HIGH HOLY HOLIDAYS

What should you be contemplating on?

September 2019

ROSH HASHANNAH - ("HEAD OF THE YEAR")

Beginning of the year according to Jewish Calendar: based on Luna.

It is now 5779 representing the number of years since God's creation of the heavens and the earth. Theologically the **most** important time of repentance and renewal.

Rosh Hashanah tends to be a day of celebration, Like New Year's celebration Yom Kippur is a far more somber holiday. Jubilee.

This period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is known as the "Ten Days of Repentance" ("Aseret Yemei Teshuvah"). According to traditional Jewish teaching, God opens the Book of Life each year on Rosh Hashanah to inscribe a person's fate for the coming year, but does not seal that fate until Yom Kippur, the "Day of Atonement."

The Days of Repentance thus offer us the opportunity to atone for past misdeeds, seek forgiveness, and mend his or her behavior through the practice of **Teshuvah**, / "**Return.**" Time and opportunity to reflect on our sins and transgressions over the past 12 months. Time Time Time to

contemplate, review, introspect on everything and unpack and start clearing. Internal cleansing. Freeing up.

On that day of **Yom Kippur**, we enter a solemn 25-hours of prayer and fasting undertaken as a gesture of penance. [self-reconciliation].

Again, I stress:

Truly important time of the year. It is a day of atonement. “At one with Myself” [At one with me]. This day is when where you ask God for forgiveness so their name can be enshrined in the book of life.

Why on that day?

Yom Kippur Morning 5779: Where Heaven Meets Earth.

Yom Kippur is the day that God decides each person's fate, **so** Jews are encouraged to make amends and ask forgiveness for sins committed during the past year. Publicly or Privately.

Clothing: **wearing white on Yom Kippur:** This is the clearest and most visible nod toward the idea of purity. You're connecting with yourself and present yourself truly "angelic," Here is Rabbi Hain says — simple (and transcendent) as that.

Torah: **Leviticus 16:29** mandates establishment of this holy day on the 10th day of the 7th month as the day of atonement for sins. It calls it the Sabbath of Sabbaths and a day upon which one must afflict one's soul. Leviticus 23:27 decrees {official order / authority} that Yom Kippur is truly a strict day of rest.

Now here is the story:

How is this world began?” and. “How old is the world”

We say it is now 5779. Now from a scientific point of view, Earth is 4.543 billion years old.

“How was the world created” According to Torah, “God spoke and the world came into being.” Now, from a scientific point of view, we have this “Big Bang Theory”.

Important story here.

According to our tradition, the bedrock upon which the Temple in Jerusalem was built is called the Even Shtiyah, a.k.a. Foundation Stone of the world. It is the center of the earth –it is the very foundation upon which God then constructed our world. It is where the world began. Midrash explains,

“world began from its central point and then developed in all direction.” That rock is 1. “The Rock” of the 2. “Dome of the Rock”, 3. Golden Dome that dominates the Old City of Jerusalem.

That Rock is special. and known as the “place where heaven meets earth”. That Rock marked the portal to heaven – and that place where God chose to build the Temple.

God put us on earth to keep the heavens aloft – to help our fellow human beings and bring holiness to our world!” Each time we act with kindness, with compassion, with generosity with our fellows we bring holiness to our world. That is the place where heaven meets earth!

Teshuva:

Return to Soul.

May we all embrace the path of Teshuvah in the coming weeks. May we gain confidence in our power to return to God with our words & thoughts, with our hearts and with our actions. God is very near to us, and God is waiting with unending patience and forgiveness.

This perspective and the Torah encourages us that *Teshuvah* is very near to us, in our mouths, in our hearts, and in our actions. Maimonides teaches:

"What constitutes teshuvah? That a sinner should abandon his sins and remove them from his thoughts, resolving in his heart never to commit them again...He must verbally confess and state these matters which he resolved in his heart" (Hilchot Teshuvah 2:2).

So this is the time of the year we reconnect with ourselves, clear our transgressions and negative thoughts or make wrong right and start again in the new year with a better you.

La Shanah Tov
Ellen Roth