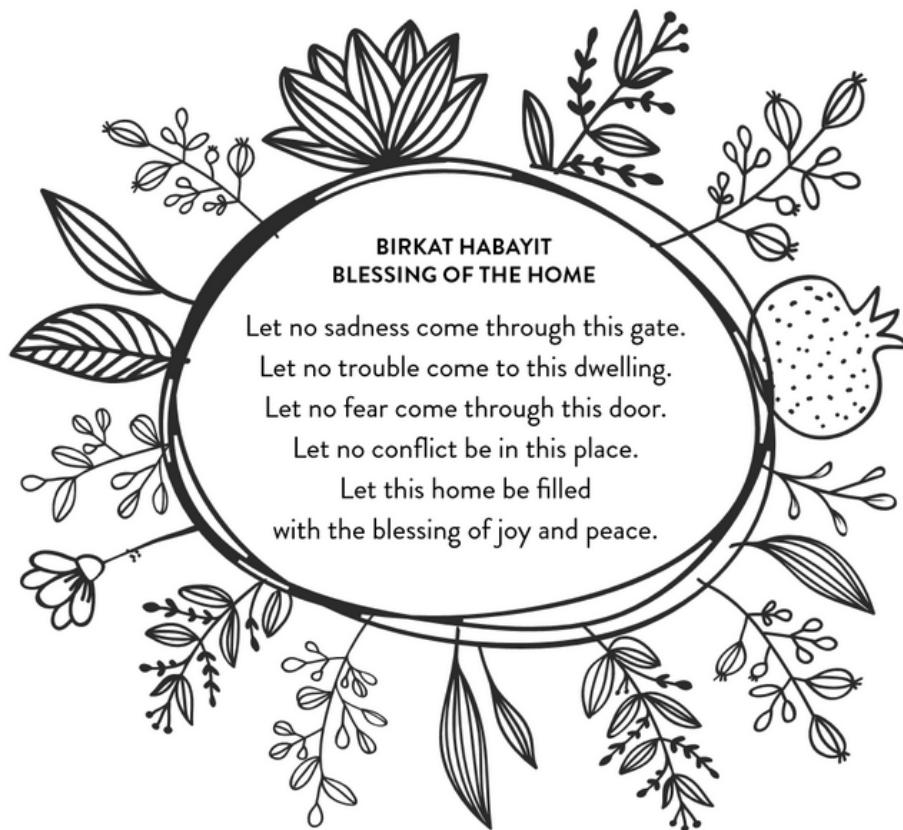


TEMV Rosh Hashanah Seder

Created by Rabbi Robin S. Sparr, Jo Rothman, and Dayne Samuels



"Festivals act as lodging for travelers making their way through the year. These festival inns are special accommodations not solely for rest or retreat from the world, but also places to halt and take our bearings to make sure we are traveling and not going around in circles." - Michael Strassfeld, *The Jewish Holidays*

Seder/Order

1. Candle lighting
2. Kiddush – Sanctifying the Day and Year
3. Shehecheyanu – Appreciating the New
4. Apples with Honey (Ashkenazi custom)
5. Symbolic Foods and New Year Wishes (Sephardi custom)
6. Hamotzi and Sweet Wishes
7. Table Topics – for discussion over the festive meal

1. Candle Lighting

Nearly all Jewish holidays begin with lighting candles, and so this one will, too. After we light the candles we wave our hands in three big horizontal circles to symbolically bring the light closer to us, and then cover our eyes while we say the blessing. When the blessing is over, take a moment of silent reflection with your eyes covered, and then open your eyes and enjoy the beauty of candlelight, bringing you into the new year.

**ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו להדליק נר של שבת ויום טוב**

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel shabat v'shel yom tov.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who has sanctified us with commandments, and commanded us to light festival candles.

2. Kiddush

**ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בורא פרי הגפן. ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
מלך העולם, אשר בחר בנו מכל עם ורוממנו מכל לשון וקידשנו
במצוותיו, ותנתן לנו ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ באהבה את יום השבת זהה ואת יום
הזיכרון הזה, يوم זיכרון תרוועה באהבה מקרא קדש זכר ליציאת
מצרים. כי בנו בחרת ואותנו קידשת מכל העמים, ודברך אמת וקיים
לעד. ברוך אתה ייְהוָה מלך על כל הארץ מקדש השבת וישראל ויום
הזיכרון.**

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam, borei p'ri ha'gafen.
Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam asher bakhar banu mikol am, v'rrom'manu
mikol lashon v'kid'shanu b'mitzvotav. Vatiten lanu Adonai Eloheinu b'ahava et Yom
HaShabbat ha'zeh v'et Yom HaZikaron ha'zeh. Yom zichron t'ruah b'ahava mikra
kodesh, zeikher litziat mitzrayim. Ki vanu vakharta v'otantu kidashtah m'kol ha'amim,
u'dvarkha emet v'kayam la'ad. Barukh atah Adonai melekh al kol ha'aretz, m'kadesh
haShabbat v'Yisrael v'Yom HaZikaron*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Creator of the fruit of the vine.
Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has chosen us from among all
peoples and sanctified us with God's commandments. And You gave us, Adonai our God, in
love this Sabbath day and this Day of Remembrance. It is a Day of Remembrance, a day for
recalling with love the sounding of the Shofar, a sacred convocation, a commemoration of the

Exodus from Egypt. For You chose us and sanctified us from among all peoples, and Your word is truth and endures forever. Blessed are You, Ruler over all the earth, who sanctifies the Sabbath and Israel and the Day of Remembrance.

3. Shehecheyanu

The shehecheyanu blessing thanks the creator for giving us life, sustaining us, and allowing us to reach this day. This blessing is said at momentous occasions, and tonight counts because it is the night when we can finally look back on the whole previous year. We made it! Whether bitter or sweet, difficult or fun, tonight we celebrate and feel grateful for making it to today, and to this table to reflect with people we care about.

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁהַחְיָנוּ וּקְיִמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעֲנוּ לַזְמָן הַזֶּה

*Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
shehecheyanu, v'kiyimanu, v'higiyana la'zman ha'zeh*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who has given us life, sustained us, and allowed us to reach this day.

4. Apples and Honey

For Ashkenazi Jews, the primary symbolic food of Rosh Hashanah is apples dipped in honey, a way of wishing for a sweet new year. Before eating apples and honey, say the following blessings:

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בָּרוּא פַּרְיָה עֵץ

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam borei pri ha-eitz.

.Blessed are You, God, Ruler of the universe, who creates fruit of the tree

יְהִי רָצֵן מִלְפָנֶיךָ שְׁתַחְדִּשׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמַתּוֹךָה

Y'hi ratzon milfanecha she-t'chadeish aleinu shanah tovah um'tukah.

May it be Your will that this year renew itself and bring us a sweet New Year

5. Symbolic Foods and New Year Wishes

For centuries, Sephardi Jewish families have gathered to celebrate a special Rosh Hashanah ceremony with a plate or meal of symbolic foods. Each food is eaten after requesting a specific kind of Divine blessing that sounds like the name of that food in Hebrew.

Since Rosh Hashanah means the head of the year, we eat foods that symbolize our wish to be heads, not tails in the year to come. Traditionally, families ate the head of a fish or sheep. You may want to instead enjoy a head of lettuce, or a more whimsical option involves **gummy fish**.

May it be Your will, God, that our heads remain clear and focused on creating a better world this year.

Before eating **dates** (*tamar*):

May it be your will, God, that hatred will end. (*Tamar* resembles the word for end, *yitamu*.)

Before eating **pomegranate**:

May we be as full of mitzvot as the pomegranate is full of seeds. (filled with numerous sweet seeds, a pomegranate is traditionally associated with the 613 mitzvot)

Before eating **string beans** (*rubia*):

May it be Your will, God, that our merits increase. (*Rubia* resembles the word for increase, *yirbu*.)

Before eating **pumpkin** or gourd and/or **carrot** (*k'ra; gezer*):

May it be Your will, God, to tear away all evil decrees against us, as our merits are proclaimed before you. (*K'ra* resembles the word for tear and proclaimed, *likroah*; *gezer* or carrot is similar to the word for decree, *gezar*)

Before eating **spinach** or **beet leaves** (*selek*):

May it be Your will, God, that all the enemies who might beat us will retreat, and we will beat a path to freedom (*Selek* resembles the word for retreat, *yistalku*).

Before eating **leeks**, **chives**, or **scallions** (*karti*):

May it be Your will, God, that our enemies be cut off. (*Karti* resembles the word for cut off, *yikartu*.)

The Power of the Pun: Inventing Your Own Symbols

Let us suggest some contemporary “green grocer” wishes punning in English on the shape, name or color of these fruits and vegetables:

Dates: May it be God’s will that all my single friends have many dates this year.

Tomatoes or Hot Peppers: May it be God’s will that this be a red-hot New Year.

Rabbi Yitz Greenberg suggested:

Peaches: May we have a “peachy” year!

Brussels Sprouts: May our good fortune “sprout”!

Lettuce: Let’s pray that our employers will raise our salary!

6. Hamotzi and Sweet Wishes

We begin our meal with hamotzi, as we acknowledge the Source of our abundance. It is customary to use a round challah. The round challah symbolizes the cyclical nature of our world and of our lives. Some people have the custom of adding raisins to the challah to give it a little more sweetness.

How are we bringing sweetness into our new year even as our world and our lives have been so drastically changed?

What can we each do to bring sweetness to the world?

Before blessing and eating the challah, we might use this hassidic wish:

“May God create yeast in your soul, causing you to ferment, and mature, to rise, elevate, to your highest possibilities, to reach your highest self.”

ברוך אתה ייְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמּוֹצִיא לְחֵם מִן הָאָרֶץ

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,

hamotzi lekhem min ha-aretz.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe,
Who brings forth bread from the earth.

7. Table Topics

Below are some ideas for discussion as you enjoy your festive meal:

Our Personal Year-at-a-Glance

Ask the people at the table to think for a minute about some of these questions and share an answer to at least one.

What was your greatest achievement/ disappointment?

What has “past” in your life and what is being “born” or “reborn”?

What event in other people’s lives brought you the greatest joy/heartache?

Whom did you most admire and why?

Name one mitzvah you are proud of having participated in.

Name one New Year’s resolution or commitment which you would like to make for the coming year.

What impossible dream would you pursue if you had enough money to take off for a year from your present occupation?

Happy Birthday to the World

Rosh Hashanah is the Birthday of the Earth that God created in seven days. So too it is a time for human rebirth and renewal. Some people might wish to prepare a birthday cake for Creation and sing Happy Birthday and make birthday wishes.

Four Themes for Rosh Hashanah - Reawakening, Judgment, Memory, Recreation

A: Yom T'ruah – The Day of Reawakening

“Truah!” shouts the shofar, blasting the alarm buried in your soul. The shofar wakes us up, and it amplifies our voices, making our prayers heard. Move in your body, stand in your power and be loud.

Reflection Questions:

When was I asleep in the past year?

What do I want to be alert to in the year to come?

B: Yom HaDin – Day of Judgment

Since the start of the month of Elul 30 days ago, our internal calculators have been in overdrive. *Cheshbon haNefesh* means an accounting of the soul, reflecting on a whole year of triumphs and mistakes and asking for forgiveness as we work to forgive others. We look backwards in order to move forward.

Reflection Questions:

From whom do I need forgiveness?

Who do I need to forgive?

C: Yom HaZikaron – Day of Remembrance

Rituals are the place where we blend memories, identities and meaning. Rosh Hashanah is known as a day of remembrance - a monumental moment - where we sit in the balance between past and future. We remember our ancestors and our actions as we reflect on what they have taught us.

Reflection Questions:

Where did I dedicate my time, energy and resources in the past year?

Who and what do I want to remember from the past year?

D: HaYom Harat Olam – Day of Recreation

Like people, the Universe has a birthday and it falls on Rosh Hashanah. And like our birthdays, it's a moment for us to dwell in a moment of renewal and recreation. We open ourselves up and rewrite our stories and our aspirations for the next year.

Reflection Questions:

What do I want to practice, seek or commit myself to for the year to come?

What do I want to create for myself and the world?

Sharing the Joy

So that we can increase the joy of the New Year with our TEMV friends, we invite you to make or send a Shanah Tovah greeting to another person or family. You might use this image to color, or any of the coloring pages in your packet, or any card or letter paper.

Shanah Tovah U'metukah - Wishing you a Good and Sweet New Year!



We are grateful to Rabbi Leonard Gordon and highholidaysathome.com for resources we have included in this booklet.