

Rosh Hashanah Seder



התנועה המסורתית
The Masorti Movement

The festive meal on the Eve of Rosh Hashanah has come to include the custom of the Rosh Hashanah Seder in which we eat various fruits and vegetables that symbolize - by taste or the sound of their name - the blessings we wish to bestow upon the new year.

The Seder has changed with time. The custom dates back to the days of the Talmud, but it has since transformed, elaborated by the different edot (Jewish ethnic groups) and in the various diasporas.

The blessings and simanim (signs) you will find below are those that have been adopted and they reflect diverse ethnic origins and traditions.

We encourage you to adopt these blessings and foods, or be inspired by them and add your own.

Apple in Honey

A merging of the Geonim's custom of eating honey with the French-Jewish custom of eating apple. Originally Ashkenazi, the custom has become common among Sephardim too.

Hold the apple in your hand and say the following blessing

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the tree.

Take a piece of apple, dip in honey, taste it and say the following

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתְּחַדֵּשׁ עָלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוֹקָה

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that You renew for us a good and sweet year.

Kara (Gourd)

The Aramaic word kara is pronounced similarly to the Hebrew kraa (to tear/rip).

Take a little piece of the Kara, bless the following and immediately eat:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who creates the fruit of the earth.

After we tasted the Kara, we say the following:

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ שֶׁתְּקַרַע רֵעַ גֹּזֵר דֵּינֵנוּ וְיִקְרָאוּ

לְפָנֶיךָ מַעֲשֵׂינֵנוּ הַטּוֹבִים

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that the decree of our sentence be torn asunder and may our merits be proclaimed before You.



Rubia (black-eyed peas)

The Aramaic word for black-eyed peas - rubia - sounds like the Hebrew words - rav (many) or ribui (abundance). The black-eyed peas symbolize abundant good fortune and good virtues.

Taste a little of the Rubia and say:

יהי רצון מלפניך, ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו, שירבו זכויותינו ותרבה הברכה בכל עמלנו

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that our merits increase and that the fruit of our labor be abundant.



Karatei (leek)

The Aramaic word sounds like the Hebrew word karet (cutting off/to be cut off).



Taste a little of the Karatei and say:

יהי רצון מלפניך, ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו שיכרתו אויבנו וכל מבקשי רעתנו

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that our enemies and all those who seek our harm be cut off.

Beetroot (The Hebrew word for beetroot - selek - sounds like siluk (to remove)

Taste a little of the Selek and say

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו שישתלקו עוונותינו.

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that our sins be removed.



Dates

The date is the honey of "the land flowing with milk and honey".

The Hebrew word - tamar - is reminiscent of the word tam (to end/cease).



Taste a little of the Tamar and say

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו שיתמו אויבנו ושנאינו וכל מבקשי רעתנו

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that our enemies, haters, and all those who seek our harm cease.

Pomegranate

The Pomegranates are filled with numerous sweet seeds, traditionally associated with the 613 mitzvot (commandments) of Torah.

After tasting a few of the pomegranate seeds say the following:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו שנהיה מלאים מצוות כרמון

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that we be as full of mitzvot as the pomegranate is full of seeds.



Fish head

The head of the fish symbolizes the beginning of the year. The fish itself represents fertility.

Taste a little of the fish and say

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו ואמותינו שנהיה לראש ולא לזנב,

ונפורה ונרבה פדגים.

May it be Your will, Lord our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, that we be as the head and not as the tail, and that we be fruitful and multiply like fish.



Readings and songs for Rosh HaShanah:

The Life you have החיים שיש לך
Yona Wallach יונה וולך

The life you have
Is the life you've lived,
Look back with
understanding,
Find the starting point,
the creation.
Create yourself,
That's the best world,
The only one
you'll be able to create,
It's all within you,
Uncover it

Start from the beginning
Look at your life
As a bad lesson
About things that were
As a punishment
Banishment
Standing in the corner
A knockout in the first round
Fix it As one who has
recovered
As one who has fallen ill

החיים שיש לך
הם החיים שחיית
הבט אחרון בהבנה
מצא את נקדת הבראשית
הבריאה
ברא את עצמך
זה העולם הטוב ביותר
היחיד
שתוכל לברא
כל זה מצוי בתוכך
גלה אותו

התחל מהתחלה
הבט על חייך
כעל שעור רע
על מה שקרה
כעל ענש
הרחקה
עמידה בפנה
נוקאאוט בסבוב הראשון
תקן כאחד שהבריא
כאחד שחלה.

Yona Wallach, a well-known Israeli poet (1944-1985), The Life You Have, in: "Mofah," Hakibbutz .Hameuhad, 1985, p 32

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What topics and themes in Yona Wallach's poem are common to the thoughts which preoccupy a person on the eve of Rosh Hashana?

Listen to the song

YouTube

"Rosh HaShanah initiates the Aseret Yimei Teshuvah commonly translated as the 'Ten Days of Repentance.' I would like to suggest that for these days to have a new dimension of meaning we translate them as the 'Ten Days of Searching, Twisting and Turning,' of wrestling with our souls and trying desperately to find new meaning to our existence."

(ABC Radio Interview September 28, 1986)

Rabbi Marshall Meyer, Conservative Rabbi, founder of the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano and activist for human rights in Argentina under the repressive anti-Semitic government of the 1970's

September 1971, a well-known Israeli radio show invited artists to write songs for the upcoming New Year. Naomi Shemer submitted the following song named "Berosh Hashanah – The New Year".

The song soon became one of Israel's most popular children's songs for the High- Holiday's season, expressing the hopes and prays for a Happy New Year.

On Rosh Hashanah, On Rosh Hashanah

A rose bloomed in my garden

On Rosh Hashanah a white boat

Anchored suddenly along the shore

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

פָּרְחָה שׁוֹשְׁנָה אֶצְלִי בַגֶּנֶה

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה סִירָה לְבַנָּה

עָגְנָה לָהּ בַּחוּף פְּתָאוּם.

On Rosh Hashana, On Rosh Hashana
Our heart answered with an ancient prayer,
That the year that begins today
Will be different and beautiful.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

לְבַנּוּ עָנָה בַתְּפִילָה נוֹשָׁנָה

שִׁיפָה וְשׁוֹנָה תְּהֵא הַשָּׁנָה

אֲשֶׁר מִתְחִילָה לָהּ הַיּוֹם

On Rosh Hashanah, on Rosh Hashanah
A cloudlet bloomed in the autumn sky
On Rosh Hashanah, like a memorial candle,
A chatzav came up in the field.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

פָּרְחָה עָנְנָה בְּרִקִיעַ הַסָּתוּ

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה כְּנֵר נִשְׁמָה

עָלָה בַשָּׂדֶה חֶצֶב.

On Rosh Hashanah, on Rosh Hashanah
Our heart answered with an ancient prayer
That the year that begins now
Will be different and beautiful.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

לְבַנּוּ עָנָה בַתְּפִילָה נוֹשָׁנָה

שִׁיפָה וְשׁוֹנָה תְּהֵא הַשָּׁנָה

אֲשֶׁר מִתְחִילָה לָהּ עַכְשָׁיו

On Rosh Hashana, On Rosh Hashana
A melody was born, which no one knew,
And within a day, a song was heard
From all the windows of the town.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

פָּרְחָה מִנְּגִינָה שְׂאִישׁ לֹא הִפִּיר

וְתוֹף יִמְמָה הַזָּמֵר הִמָּה

מִכָּל חַלּוֹנוֹת הָעִיר.

On Rosh Hashanah, on Rosh Hashanah
Our heart answered with an ancient prayer
That the year that begins with a song
Will be different and beautiful.

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה, בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה

לְבַנּוּ עָנָה בַתְּפִילָה נוֹשָׁנָה

שִׁיפָה וְשׁוֹנָה תְּהֵא הַשָּׁנָה

אֲשֶׁר מִתְחִילָה לָהּ בְּשִׁיר.

The famous song "Beshana Habaah- Next Year" written by Ehud Manor is about hope that in the future we will be able sit on the balcony and watch children play, instead of worrying about all the concerns we face today. The balcony which appears in the song is in fact the balcony of Ehud Manors parents in the town of Binyamina. This seemingly joyous song with its words of encouragement and expressions of hope for the upcoming New Year points to the past year which had not really been very good. This song is not necessarily a happy and optimistic song, but rather a song of longing and prayer for a better year, and a better future.

The dream and hope that Israel will one day be peaceful and tranquil.

Next year we'll sit on the porch
And count migrating birds
Children on vacation will play tag
Between the house and the fields

בשנה הבאה נשב על המרפסת
ונספר צפרים נודדות
ילדים בחפזה ישחקו תופסת
בין הבית לבין השדות

You will yet see, you will yet see
How good it will be
Next year

עוד תראה, עוד תראה
כמה טוב יהיה
בשנה, בשנה הבאה

Red grapes will ripen till the evening
And will be served chilled to the table and
Languid winds will carry to the crossroads
Old newspapers and a cloud.

ענבים אדמים יבשילו עד הערב
ויגשו צוננים לשלחן
ורוחות רדומים ישאו על אם הדרך
עתונים ישנים וענן

You will yet see, you will yet see
How good it will be
Next year

עוד תראה, עוד תראה
כמה טוב יהיה
בשנה, בשנה הבאה

Next Year We will spread out our hands
Towards the radiant light
A white heron like a light will spread her
Wings and within them the sun will rise.

בשנה הבאה נפרש כפות ידים
מול האור הנגה, הלבן
אנפה לבנה תפרש באון כנפים
והשמש תזרח בתוכן

You will yet see, you will yet see
How good it will be
Next year

עוד תראה, עוד תראה
כמה טוב יהיה
בשנה בשנה הבאה

Listen to the song

