

Rosh Hashanah Torah Readings in a Nutshell

(Genesis 21:1–34; Genesis 22:1–24)

Day 1:

G-d remembers Sarah, and gives her and Abraham a son, who is named Isaac (Yitzchak), meaning “will laugh”; Abraham is then one hundred years old, and Sarah ninety. Isaac is circumcised at the age of eight days.

Hagar and Ishmael are banished from Abraham’s home and wander in the desert; G-d hears the cry of the dying lad, and saves his life by showing his mother a well. The Philistine king Avimelech makes a treaty with Abraham at Be’er Sheba.

Day 2:

G-d commands Abraham to sacrifice his son on Mount Moriah (the Temple Mount) in Jerusalem. Isaac is bound and placed on the altar, and Abraham raises the knife to slaughter his son. A voice from heaven calls to stop him, saying that it was a test; a ram, caught in the undergrowth by its horns, is offered in Isaac’s place.

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The Baal Korei, and
The Security Volunteers



The period of time before and during Rosh Hashanah is not only the occasion which demands spiritual stock-taking in general, but it also begs for a profound inner appreciation of the tremendous capacities which one possesses, as a human - the crown of Creation, and as a Jew whom the Creator has given His Divine Law of Life (Toras Chayyim). For Rosh Hashanah is the day when Man was created.

-- The Rebbe



Hearing the Shofar

The Torah refers to Rosh Hashanah as the “day of the [shofar] blast.” Since Rosh Hashanah is two days long, we need to hear the shofar blown during the daytime hours of both of those days—unless the first day falls on Shabbat, in which case we blow the shofar only on the second day.

Although the shofar may be blown until sunset, the traditional time for shofar blowing is during morning services, after the Torah has been read, before the Musaf prayer (additional service recited on Shabbat and holidays). It is customary to blow the shofar several more times during the Musaf service. ❖

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**Join us each weekday
morning Mon-Fri
as we delve into
the mysteries of
Chassidic concepts.
5:55 am, followed
immediately by
Shacharis.**

Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, Sep 16, 2023
Eastern Daylight Savings

Earliest Tallis..... 5:41 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:42 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) .. 1:23 PM
Plag Hamincha..... 5:50 PM
Earliest Evening Shema 7:32 PM

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Israeli Division:

Rabbi Yudi and Chana Eisenbach

Rosh Hashana Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Sep 15 / Elul 29

Candle Lighting 6:48 pm

Mincha 6:50 pm

Shabbos Day – Sep 16 / Tishrei 1

Shacharis 9:30 am*

Torah Reading 10:55 am

Musaf 12:30 pm

Mincha 6:50 pm

Light candles after 7:45 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:42 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Sunday – Sep 17 / Tishrei 2

Shacharis 9:30 am*

Torah Reading 10:55 am

Shofar Sounding 12:00 pm

Musaf 12:30 pm

Mincha (and then Tashlich) ... 6:20 pm

Yom Tov Ends 7:43 pm

Bulletin

*This week's Bulletin
is sponsored by
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Chassidic Masters

The Binding of Isaac

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

This particular question — what is it that sets apart the akeidah from the countless other instances of human martyrdom and self-sacrifice? — is raised by almost all the commentaries and expounders of the Torah.

For the binding of Isaac has come to represent the ultimate in the Jew's devotion to G-d. Every morning, we preface our prayers by reading the Torah's account of the akeidah, and then say: "Master of the Universe! Just as Abraham our father suppressed his compassion for his only son to do Your will with a whole heart, so may Your compassion suppress Your wrath against us, and may Your mercy prevail over Your attributes of strict justice."

And on Rosh Hashanah, when the world trembles in judgment before G-d, we evoke the binding of Isaac by sounding the horn of a ram (reminiscent of the ram which replaced Isaac as an offering), as if to say: If we have no other merit, remember Abraham's deed. Remember how the first Jew bound all succeeding generations of Jews in a covenant of self-sacrifice to You.

Obviously, the supreme test of a person's faith is his willingness to sacrifice his very existence for its sake. But what is so unique about Abraham's sacrifice? Have not countless thousands of Jews given their lives rather than renounce their covenant with the Almighty?

One might perhaps explain that the willingness to sacrifice one's child is a far greater demonstration of faith than to forfeit one's own life. But in this, too, Abraham was not unique. Time and again through the generations, Jews have encouraged their children to go to their deaths rather than violate their faith. Typical is the story of Chanah, who, seeing her seven children tortured to death rather than bow before a Greek idol, proclaimed: "My children! Go to Abraham your father and say to him: You bound one offering upon the altar, and I have bound seven offerings . . ."

Furthermore, while Abraham was prepared to sacrifice his son, in thousands of akeidahs throughout our history, Jews actually gave up their lives and the lives of their entire families. And, unlike with Abraham, G-d had not directly spoken to them and requested their sacrifice. Their deeds were based on their own convictions and the strength of their commitment to an invisible and often elusive G-d. And many gave their lives rather than violate even a relatively minor tenet of their faith, even in cases in which the Torah does not require the Jew to do so.

Nevertheless, as Abarbanel writes in his commentary on Genesis, it is the binding of Isaac "that is forever on our lips in our prayers . . . For in it lies the entire strength of Israel and their merit before their Heavenly Father . . ." Why? What about the many thousands who made the ultimate sacrifice in reiteration of our loyalty to G-d?

The same question may be asked in regard to Abraham himself. The akeidah was the tenth and final "test" in Abraham's life.

In his first test of faith, Abraham was cast into a fiery furnace for his refusal to acknowledge the emperor Nimrod, arch-idol of his native Ur Casdim, and for his continued commitment to teaching the world the truth of a one, non-corporeal and omnipotent G-d. All this before G-d had revealed Himself to him and had chosen him and his descendants to serve as a "light unto the nations" and the purveyors of His word to humanity.

This early act of self-sacrifice seems, in a certain respect, to be even greater than the latter ones. A man, all on his own, comes to recognize the truth and devotes himself to its dissemination—to the extent that he is even willing to sacrifice his very life to this end. All this without a command, or even sign, from Above.

And yet, the binding of Isaac is considered the most important test of Abraham's faith. The Talmud asks: "Why did G-d, in commanding Abraham regarding the akeidah, say, 'Please, take your son'?" Answers the Talmud: "G-d said to Abraham: 'I have tried you with many tests, and you have withstood them all. Now, I beg you, please withstand this test for Me, lest they say that the earlier ones were of no substance'" (Talmud, Sanhedrin 89b).

Again we ask: why? Granted that the akeidah was the most demanding test of all, why are the others "of no substance" without it?

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The chassidic masters explain the significance of the akeidah with a metaphor:

Once there was an untamed wilderness. Not a trail penetrated its thick underbrush, not a map charted its forbidding terrain. But one day there came a man who accomplished the impossible: he cut a path through this impregnable land.

Many trod in his footsteps. It was still a most difficult journey, but they had his charts to consult, his trail to follow. Over the years, there were some who made the journey under even more trying conditions than those which had challenged the first pioneer. While he had done his work in broad daylight, they stumbled about in the black of night; while he had only his determination for company, they made the trip weighed down by heavy burdens. But all were equally indebted to him. Indeed, all their attainments could be said to be but extensions of his own great deed.

Abraham was the pioneer of self-sacrifice. And the first instance of true self-sacrifice in all of history was the binding of Isaac.

For to sacrifice one's self is not the same as to sacrifice one's life. There is a world of difference between the two.

The human story includes many chapters of heroic sacrifice. Every generation and society has had its martyrs—individuals who gave their lives for their faith, for their homeland, and for virtually every cause under the sun. They did so for a variety of reasons. For some it was an act of desperation. To them, their lives were not worth living unless a certain objective could be attained. Others believed that their deed would be richly rewarded in the hereafter, so they readily exchanged the temporal benefits of physical life for the soul's eternal gain. Finally, there were those for whom their cause had grown to be more significant to them than their lives. They had come to so completely identify with a certain goal that it became more integral to their "self" than did their existence as individuals.

In all the above cases, the martyr is sacrificing his life, but not his self. Indeed, he is sacrificing his physical life for the sake of his self, whether it is for the sake of the self projected by his obsession, the spiritual self of his

immortal soul, or a broader, universal "self" he has come to identify with. Ultimately, his is a selfish act, "selfish" in the most positive and altruistic sense of the word—here is an individual who has succeeded in transcending the narrow, material definition of "self" which dominates our corporeal world—but selfish nonetheless.

Abraham was a man with a mission. A mission for which he sacrificed everything, a mission more important to him than his own life.

For many years he had agonized over the fact that there was no heir to this mission, that his work of bringing the beliefs and ethics of monotheism to a pagan world would cease with his passing from the world. Then came the divine promise: miraculously, at the age of one hundred, he will have a son, out of whom will stem the people of Israel. "You shall call his name Isaac," said G-d, "and I shall establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him."

And then G-d told him to destroy it all.

When Abraham bound Isaac upon the altar, it was not in the service of any calling or cause. In fact, it ran contrary to everything he believed in and taught, to everything for which he had sacrificed his life, to everything G-d Himself had told him. He could see no reason, no purpose for his act. Every element of his self cried out against it—his material self, his spiritual self, his transcendent and altruistic self. But he did it. Why? Because G-d had told him to.

Abraham was the pioneer of self-sacrifice. Before Abraham, the self was inviolable territory. Man could enlighten the self's priorities, he could even broaden and subliminate it, but he could not supersede it. Indeed, how could he? As a creature of free choice, man's every act stems from within. His every deed has a motive (conscious or otherwise), and his every motive has a rationale, a reason why it is beneficial to his own existence. So how could he be motivated to annihilate his own self?

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The instinct to preserve and enhance one's self is the source and objective of a creature's every drive and desire; man could no more transcend it than lift himself up by pulling on the hair of his own head.

Yet Abraham did the impossible. He sacrificed his self for the sake of something beyond the scope of the most transcendent of identities. Had he not done so, no other act of self-sacrifice—previous or subsequent, of his own or of his descendants—could be presumed to be of any “substance,” to be anything more than a product of the self. But when Abraham bound Isaac upon the altar, the heavenly voice proclaimed: “Now I know that you fear G-d.” Now I know that the will of G-d supersedes even your most basic instincts. Now I know that all your deeds, including those which could be explained as self-motivated, are, in essence, driven by the desire to serve your Creator. Now I know that your entire life was of true, selfless substance.

So when we speak of the akeidah, we also speak of those who trod the path that this great deed blazed. Of the countless thousands who died for the creed of Abraham, of the many millions who lived for its sake. Their sacrifices—great and petty, cataclysmic and everyday—may, on the surface, seem but the outgrowth of their personal beliefs and aspirations: commendable and extraordinary, but only the fulfillment of an individual soul's identity. But the akeidah revealed them to be so much more than that.

For Abraham bequeathed to his descendants the essence of Jewishness: that at the core of one's very being lies not the self but one's commitment to the Creator. And that, ultimately, one's every choice and act is an expression of that “spark of divinity” within. ❖

Paterson Minyan

If any members of the community can attend any of the High Holidays Minyanim benefitting seniors, it would be a great Mitzvah and Chessed opportunity! Help make the Minyan!

The Paterson Shul @Seniors Tower of Paterson located at 510 E. 27th Street/Paterson will have the following High Holiday Minyanim:

Rosh Hashanah

Minyan on Saturday, September 16th beginning at 9:00a.m.

Yom Kippur

Night-time Minyan on Sunday, September 24th -- Kol Nidre beginning at 6:45p.m.

Day-time Minyan only for: Shachris & Musaf on Monday, September 25th beginning at 9:00a.m.

We have Talaisim and Machzorim in Hebrew/English and Russian. There is no fee to join, it's a price-less Minyan!

For more information, please email: JerrySchranz@Gmail.com or visit Facebook: The Paterson Shul

Community Announcement

The parking behind Shomerei Torah is reserved exclusively for the women using the Mikvah.

After dusk, PLEASE DO NOT PARK THERE!!

Please respect their privacy!

Rosh Hashanah Haftorahs in a nutshell

Day 1:

I Samuel 1:1–2:10

The haftorah for the first day of Rosh Hashanah describes the birth of the prophet Samuel to Elkanah and his wife Chanah, who had been childless for many years. This echoes the story discussed in the day's Torah reading, about Sarah giving birth to Isaac after many years of childlessness.

During one of her annual pilgrimages to Shiloh, the site of the Tabernacle, Chanah tearfully and quietly entreated G-d to bless her with a son, promising to dedicate him to His service. Eli the high priest saw her whispering, and berated her, thinking that she was a drunkard. After hearing Chanah's explanation, that she had been whispering in prayer, Eli blessed her that G-d should grant her request.

Chana conceived and gave birth to a son whom she called Shmuel (Samuel). Once the child was weaned, she brought him to Shiloh and entrusted him to the care of Eli.

The haftorah ends with Chanah's prayer, wherein she thanks G-d for granting her wish, extols His greatness, exhorts the people not to be haughty or arrogant, and prophesies regarding the Messianic redemption.

Day 2:

Jeremiah 31:1–19

The haftorah for the second day of Rosh Hashanah talks about G-d's everlasting love for His people, and the future ingathering of their exiles. In the last verse of this hauntingly beautiful haftorah, G-d says, "Is Ephraim [i.e., the Children of Israel] not My beloved son? Is he not a precious child, that whenever I speak of him I recall him even more?" This follows one of the primary themes of the Rosh Hashanah prayers, our attempt to induce G-d to remember us in a positive light on this Day of Judgment.

Jeremiah begins by affirming G-d's love for the Jewish people. "With everlasting love I have loved you; therefore I have drawn lovingkindness over you."

Because of this love, G-d assures His nation that they have a very bright future awaiting them. "I will yet build you up, then you shall be built forever, O virgin of Israel; you will yet adorn yourself with your tambourines, and go forth in joyous dance." Jeremiah then describes the ingathering of the exiles, when all of Israel will be returned to the Holy Land: "You will again plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria . . . Behold, I will bring [Israel] from the land of the north, and gather them from the ends of the earth . . . a large assembly will return here. Weeping with joy they will come, and with compassion I will lead them . . . I will turn their mourning into joy, and will console them and gladden them after their sorrow."

Jeremiah then describes the heavenly scene, where the silence is broken by the sound of bitter weeping. Our Matriarch Rachel refuses to be consoled, for her children have been exiled. G-d responds: "Still your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears . . . There is hope for your future; the children shall return to their border." ❖

Tzom Gedaliah Fast Day

What, why and how we mourn on the day after Rosh Hashanah

After the Babylonians destroyed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and exiled many Jews in 3338 (423 BCE), they appointed Gedaliah ben Achikam as governor of the remaining Jews in the Holy Land. Jews who had taken refuge in the surrounding lands of Ammon, Moab and Edom heard of his appointment and returned to Judea to join his group—the last remnant of the once-mighty Judea. Under his wise and pious leadership, they tilled, planted and cultivated, coaxing the ravaged land back to health.

Prior to Rosh Hashanah 3339, Gedaliah received word that a certain Ishmael ben Netaniah, jealous of his position of power and dissatisfied with his tactical alliance with the Babylonians, was planning to kill him and usurp the leadership for himself. But the trusting Gedaliah refused to believe that Ishmael would act treacherously, and restrained those who wanted to kill Ishmael.

On Rosh Hashanah, Ishmael came to Gedaliah with ten men, ostensibly to celebrate the holiday with him. While they were eating together, Ishmael and his men got up and killed Gedaliah, as well as all the other Jewish men and Babylonian soldiers who were present.

This treachery was followed by more bloodshed. It also caused the Jews to flee to Egypt, effectively ending the prospects of Jewish settlement in the Holy Land until the return of the Babylonian exiles in the year 3390 (371 BCE). Thus, the Babylonian exile was absolute, and Judea was left bereft of her children.

Tzom Gedaliah is a dawn-to-dusk fast observed on the day after Rosh Hashanah. In memory of Gedaliah's tragic death and its disastrous aftermath, we fast every year on the 3rd of Tishrei, the day after Rosh Hashanah. Like other "minor" fasts, it begins at dawn (alot hashachar) and ends at nightfall, and work is permitted.

During (or before) morning services, it is customary to add special selichot, penitential prayers.

During both morning and afternoon prayers, the Torah is taken out, and we read the portion from Exodus 32:11–14 and 34:1–10 in which G-d forgives Israel for the sin of the golden calf. During the afternoon prayers, we also read a haftorah, from Isaiah 55:6–56:8.

As it is written in Zechariah 8:19, Tzom Gedaliah is one of the four fasts that will be converted to joy and feasting with the arrival of Moshiach. May it happen soon. ❖

Reserve Your Seats for
an amazing high holiday experience.

<https://www.flchabad.com/congregation/seating/>

For Complete High Holiday Prayer Schedule, see:

<https://www.flchabad.com/congregation/schedule/>

From Our Sages – Rosh Hashana

Abraham established an eshel at Be'er Sheva; there he called the name of the L-rd, G-d of the world (Genesis 21:33)

When Abraham's guests wished to bless him for his generosity, he would say to them: "Has the food you have eaten been provided by myself? You should thank, praise and bless He who spoke the world into being!"

If they refused, Abraham would demand payment for the food they had eaten. "How much do I owe you?" they would ask. "A jug of wine is ten folarin," Abraham would say; "a pound of meat, ten folarin; a loaf of bread, ten folarin." When the guest would protest these exorbitant prices, Abraham would counter: "Who supplies you with wine in the middle of the desert? Who supplies you with meat in the desert? Who supplies you with bread in the desert?" When the guest would realize the predicament he was in he would relent and proclaim: "Blessed be the G-d of the world, from whose providence we have eaten."

(Midrash Rabbah; Tosefot Shantz on Sotah 10b) ❖



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שבת שלום גוט שבת!



L'Shana Tova and Good Shabbos to all!