

# THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



**ROSH HASHANAH EDITION**



London's Leading Young Professionals Platform and Jewish Communal Centre



**RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL**  
*TAL Founder & Director*

## ROSH HASHANAH

What a year we have had. Just a few weeks after the new year we were hit by the October 7 massacre, the worst murdering of Jews since the holocaust. Wars have started, people have died, been injured, taken hostage and thousands of residents in the north and south of Israel have been displaced and the mood has turned completely to one of sombre and disaster. Antisemitism is rife and we no longer feel at home wherever we live. We seem to have been living in a bubble of safety, a bubble of world understanding that has ended abruptly this year. It's been tough. What's our response?

First, we need to know that the seeds of the entire year are planted on Rosh Hashanah. It's the day that G-d judges the world, and the book of life and death are open. It's a serious day. But it's a day that G-d has provided for us, so that we can change the world and our year ahead.

With that in mind let us look into how we can change.

The Jewish people are called Banim Atem LaHashem – the children of G-d. Sometimes parents bring up children and the children know better and try things they shouldn't be doing. They go off the path. A parent always loves his child and will do anything to try and bring them back. G-d has placed in the world an incredible way of fixing what we might think is the unfixable – it's called Teshuva – returning to our father, returning to G-d!

The essence of teshuvah, which literally means "return" to G-d, is that we are given the ability to actually change what was and to return to our natural state, which is pure and connected to the Divine. Any time a person commits a transgression, it is as if the strands of rope connecting us above are being cut. When we "return," we are tying thick knots in the rope, reconnecting us with G-d.

There is a three-part process to doing teshuvah: Confession (vidui): where we verbally acknowl-

edge the wrongdoing and vocalize our awareness that we have transgressed G-d's will.

Regret (charata): the act of asking forgiveness should not just be words spoken; we need to be truly sorry for what we have done.

Commitment for the future (kabbalah al ha'atid): where we pledge not to do this again, and we really, truly mean it.

There are so many things we need to return to G-d for that we might become depressed and never start the process.

Rabenu Yona in Shaarie Teshuva explains (1:9) that there are many levels to teshuva like washing a garment. If you just put through a simple wash, it won't wash off all the stains but will wash of some. Intense washing will wash it all.

Many people have approached me with hands held high in a sigh saying its too hard to do Teshuva, it never seems to work.

Our response is that we have to start somewhere, don't conquer the world but start somewhere concentrate on that path and clean one "stain" at a time.

In fact Resh Lakish taught (Yuma 38b):

If one comes to impurify, G-d opens before him the opportunity to exercise his free will and do as he please. If one comes to purify, G-d assists him.

Note the difference; when it comes to sinning if a person persists in that bad way, then G-d will enable him to continue by opening a path. But when it comes to someone who wants to do good and return to G-d, He doesn't just open He assists him in getting there.

So if you think that it's too hard to do Teshuva then think again. The main thing is to start.

We don't have to think that we have to accomplish everything in one go.

The Midrash (in Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1:3) on the words "Nagila Venismecha Bach" relates an incredible story.

In the city of Sidon, there was a couple who was married for ten years but could not have children. They loved each other but realised that it wasn't going to work, and they wanted to try and perhaps the blessing to have children would

### TIMES FOR ROSH HASHANAH AT THE TAL CENTRE:

**WEDNESDAY 2ND OCTOBER**  
MINCHA & ARVIT: 18:10pm  
ROSH HASHANAH BEGINS: 18:20pm

**THURSDAY 3RD OCTOBER**  
SHACHARIT: 8:15am  
TEKI'AT SHOFAR: 10:30am (approx)  
MINCHA: 5:45pm  
TASHLICH: 6:15pm  
ARVIT: 7:00pm  
CANDLE LIGHTING: not before 7:23pm

**FRIDAY 4TH OCTOBER**  
SHACHARIT: 8:15am  
TEKI'AT SHOFAR: 10:30am (approx)  
MINCHA, KABBALAT SHABBAT AND  
CANDLE LIGHTING: no later than 6:15pm

**SHABBAT SHUVA 5TH OCTOBER**  
SHACHARIT: 8:45am  
ARVIT AND END OF SHABBAT: 7:18pm

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**DVAR TORAH**  
Rosh Hashanah  
By Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

**DVAR TORAH**  
היום הרת עולם...  
By Rabbi David Baadani

**DVAR TORAH**  
Tehillim for our Times  
By Rabbi Benji Stone

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Teshuva - Every Little Helps  
By Jacob Boyden

**KIDS ZONE - QUIZ**

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be if they divorced and married someone else. Reluctantly they came before Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai to request that he arrange their divorce. Rabbi Shimon told them that he would arrange this but first just like they had a party when they got married, they should have a celebration the night before the divorce.

The couple obeyed and made a huge feast. What did the wife do at this feast? She got her husband drunk. In his inebriated state, he told his wife, My daughter, pick any good object that you see in the house and take it with you when you leave to your father's house. At the end of the party the husband was sleeping, and she took him on his bed to her fathers house. Once the affect of wine wore off and he woke up, he asked his wife, where he was?

She replied, "In my father's house."  
 "But why?" he asked. She looked at him and said, "Did you not tell me last night that I could choose any good object in the house

and take it with me to my father's house? I have nothing better in this world than you!"

The couple returned to Rabbi Shimon and related the matter. Rabbi Shimon blessed them and told them to stay married. A year later they were blessed with a child.

Why couldn't Rabbi Shimon have just given them the blessing in the beginning when they came to him.

Because in order for the blessing to fall, there needs to be a vessel made by the recipient. There has to be a push forward in the right direction and then, G-d Himself will come to assist!

The Midrash goes on to tell us that this story is really a metaphor for our relationship with G-d. Our tradition teaches that the Jewish people were married to G-d at Mount Sinai when we received the Torah, with the mountain suspended above our heads serving as a Chuppah (wedding canopy) and the Ten Commandments as our wedding ring.

Unfortunately, throughout the long years of our exile, we have lost our way and become distant from our Beloved, with our relationship no longer bearing fruit. Sometimes, in our great despair and helplessness, we have even thought that this relationship is over, G-d forbid. In times like these, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai taught us to think back to our wedding day at mount Sinai, and to remind ourselves how we felt at that time, in the hope that we can re-awaken those feelings of unconditional love and closeness that we and G-d once felt towards each other.

We are told to do Teshuva – to return to G-d. This Rosh Hashanah after experiencing the year we have had and the awakening calls around the world, let us return to G-d.

G-d is waiting to open the doors for us, chose an opening, something to link you back to G-d in a meaningful Jewish way and do Teshuva so that G-d can open those doors, and we see a year full of health peace success and the Geula Kerova!



## RABBI DAVID BAADANI

### Director - TAL Chazanut Program

### היום הרת עולם...

On this day, the world came into being, this day is the world's day of birth. Rosh Hashana is the anniversary when we celebrate a new year, the birthing of the creation and our ancestors Adam and Eve. Where does the term 'הרת עולם' comes from? It comes from a verse at the end of Jeremiah (chapter 20). Jeremiah was a prophet who felt that his life was a cursed life. He said: Accursed be the day that I was born, Accursed be the man who brought my father the news and said, "A boy is born to you," and then he said; cursed is the fact that he emerged. Jeremiah wished for a different outcome, so he said, ותהי לי אמי, I would have wished that my mother might be my grave, and her womb הרת עולם, a place where I remain pregnant forever. Jeremiah wishes that he would never born, that he would never see the light of day, that he would never emerged to what he felt was a cursed world. He wished to remain הרת עולם in his mother womb, pregnant forever.

Asks Rabbi David Abudarham (14th century, Spain), the Sages got the term הרת עולם, from Jeremiah, but the interpretation they gave to these words seems completely different.

In Jeremiah הרת means 'Pregnant'. In Rosh Hashana it means a 'Birth'. In Jeremiah עולם means 'Forever' and in Rosh Hashana prayers it means 'The world'. Does הרת עולם mean 'Pregnant forever' or 'The birth of the world'?

As we move a few days subsequent to Rosh Hashana, the holy day of Yom Kippur. The Cohen Gadol, the high priest has just emerged from the Kodesh HaKodashim, The Holiest of holies, whole year we anticipated this moment. The holiest Jew on the holiest day enters the holiest place. It was allowed only once a year, The first thing which he did when he came out, היה מתפלל תפילה קצרה, he would pray a short prayer for the needs that defines the collective body of the Jewish people. He prays for the rain because its absence might cause a famine and starvation, he asks for the livelihood of the Jewish people, that they would not need the help of each other and other nations, the Cohen Gadol also ask that the trees of the field should yield their produces, and he finally asks לָא יַעֲדֵי עֲבִיד שׁוֹלְטָן מַדְבַּיְתַּי זְהוּדָה, the Jewish people shouldn't lose their independence and sovereignty. But he adds one more line to this short prayer. שְׁנָה שְׁלֹא תִפֹּל אִשָּׁה פְּרִי. A year in which no woman should experience a miscarriage.

If the Cohen Gadol already got to this level of prayer to ask for the individual needs, why not to ask that people shouldn't fall ill and those who are ill should experience recovery and those who are infertile and cannot even give birth should be able to have children. He doesn't mention any of those not because they're not important but because this is a very short prayer of things that affect the nation generally. So why he added this particular request. A year in which a woman does not experience a miscarriage?

The Tzemach Tzedek (Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn 1789 – 1866) based on the work of his grandfather Ravbi Shneur

Zalman of Liadi (Author of the Tanya, 1745 - 1812) says. When the high priest goes into the holiest of holies he is not the only one who goes there. On a spiritual level every Jew goes into the Kodesh HaKodashim. Whenever one enters into their holiest space, whenever you enter into a space where you can see yourself with more transparency when you're not entangled by so much trauma, fear, insecurity, you come out and you're pregnant. Pregnant with dreams, pregnant with possibilities, pregnant with potential, and that moment the high priest says תפילה קצרה, a short prayer. In this short prayer he prays for a year in which a woman should not experience a miscarriage. Of course that means on a physical, biological level. But on a deeper level, how many of us are pregnant with potential with possibility filled with dreams with so much opportunity to change ourselves and change the world and yet sadly we experience a miscarriage. Now we will understand the depth of our Sages when they took the הרת עולם of Jeremiah which means pregnant forever and converted into an הרת עולם of Rosh Hashana the birth of the world. That was precisely their point. Our Sages wanted to teach us that it is up to every individual to choose whether their dreams will remain pregnant forever or will actualize into reality. The decision to pursue a dream, to nurture it, and to bring it to life lies within each person's hands, shaped by their actions, determination, and the courage to overcome obstacles. Dreams can either stay dormant, unfulfilled, or they can evolve into something tangible, depending on the effort and passion invested in them.



## RABBI BENJI STONE, TAL Chavruta Program

### Tehillim for Our Times; Chapter 2 - לָמָּה רָגַשׁוּ גּוֹיִם - The Invincible Wasp

וְאָנִי נִסְכַּחְתִּי מִלְּכִי עַל-צִיּוֹן הַר-קֹדֶשׁ:  
But I have installed My king on Zion, My holy mountain (Tehillim, 2;6)

King David considers why it is that our enemies constantly conspire against us, seeking to attack us in the hope of ejecting us from society.

In our modern world how much evidence do we see of certain vocal elements declaring - albeit in covert fashion - "Let us remove the bonds the Jews have placed upon us and throw them off (ibid. 2;3)?"

How often do we detect overtones of the age - old grumblings of how Jews maintain excessive influence in the fields of politics or finance?

Some years back, having just experienced the raw hate of an anti - semitic university lecturer, I chatted with a Malaysian law student who told me that his sister had studied at Harvard and that in her time, the highest achieving law students were always Jewish. He told me that he felt that anti-semitism stemmed from jealousy of such consistent success. By this definition anti - semitism is not a hatred of the Jew himself. Rather the anti - semite sees an opportunity for personal or commercial self - gain by bringing down the competition.

More recently we have seen a different

sort of anti-semitism come to the fore whereby we have indeed been targeted simply because of our Jewish identity or the fact that we seek to hold on to a Jewish state.

As we continue to experience a palpable and increasing atmosphere of animosity we might question if we have what it takes to pull through.

Can we really be confident of our survival as a nation?

King David teaches us in the verse above that these groups can plan to destroy us but they have not woken up to the realization that it is G-d who has "installed his king on Zion". It is the divine will that we exist as a people forever. As Rabbi Yaakov Emden famously wrote in the introduction to his siddur; the miracle of the survival of the Jews throughout the ages is

"greater to me than all the miracles and wonders that G-d performed for our forefathers in Egypt and the wilderness and the Land of Israel".

Some have argued that it is not G-d behind the story of the survival of the Jews. It is more the intense conviction held by the Jews of the truth of their religion that fortifies them, enabling them to survive constant persecution. However, this theory does not stand up to the facts. How many cults have developed in history and simply vanished - even though its members had shown a

comprehensive willingness to give their lives for their leader?

The survival of the Jews through the ages is akin to a wasp gliding around in a busy room full of people. There is a common desire to have the wasp crushed and certain individuals might even chase it with a fly-swat. Remarkably the wasp just keeps reappearing. One hour later it is still there. Two hours later. Three hours later. Now imagine coming back to the room a week later and you find the wasp alive. Survival against the odds in such circumstances would surely be considered remarkable - if not bizarre - and one needs to consider the possibility of other factors at play.

We, the Jews are that wasp. Numerous nations have taken up that fly swat and tried to eliminate us as we travel around the globe in this bitter galut (exile).

Surely the only explanation for our surviving this constant and premeditated attempt to destroy us is the hand of G-d. Perhaps this is the meaning behind the Shema Yisrael prayer.

"Hear oh Israel - Hashem is our G-d - Hashem is One".

If we "hear" or "pay attention to" the experiences of our nation throughout history - the unbelievable story of the survival of a nation against the odds - then we will naturally come to the belief that "Hashem is our G-d - Hashem is One".



## JACOB BOYDEN

### TAL Schools Educator

### TESHUVA - EVERY LITTLE HELPS!

Parshat Nitzavim is always read before Rosh Hashanah but what is the connection? Throughout the Parsha we see the theme of Teshuvah. Just a small example is in the 4th Aliyah:

וְהָיָה כִּי יָבֹאוּ עֲלֶיךָ כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה הַבְּרָכָה וְהַקְּלָלָה אֲשֶׁר נִתְּנִי לְפָנֶיךָ וְהִשְׁבַּחְתָּ אֶל לַבָּרָךְ בְּכָל הַיּוֹמִים אֲשֶׁר הִדִּיחֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ שְׁמָה וְשָׁבַת עַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלִי כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּךָ הַיּוֹם וּבְנִיךָ בְּכָל לַבָּרָךְ וּבְכָל נַפְשֶׁךָ

When all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you take them to heart among all the nations where the Lord

your God has banished you, and you return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and soul. Both the Ramban and the Keli Yakar see from here that Teshuva is Mideorayta- From Torah source.

In the 5th Aliyah there is some very confusing Pesukim that require explanation:

כִּי הַמִּצְוָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּךָ הַיּוֹם לֹא נִפְלְאת הוּא מִמֶּךָ וְלֹא רְחוּקָה הוּא לֹא בַשָּׁמַיִם הוּא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲלֶה לְנֹוֹ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְיִקְרָה לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמַעְנֵנוּ אֶתְּהָ וְנִשְׁעָנָה וְלֹא מֵעֵבֶר לַיָּם הוּא לֵאמֹר מִי יַעֲבֹר לָנוּ אֶל עֵבֶר הַיָּם וְיִקְרָה לָנוּ וְיִשְׁמַעְנֵנוּ אֶתְּהָ וְנִשְׁעָנָה כִּי קָרוֹב אֲלֵיךָ הַדְּבָר מֵאֵד בְּפִיךָ וּבְלִבְּךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת

For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it

far off.

It is not in heaven that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us and get it for us, so that we may hear it and do it?'

Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us and get it for us, so that we may hear it and do it?'

But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

Firstly what's the commandment that Hashem is talking about? What would be so difficult about doing it? What does it mean it's not far off? The Keli Yakar says these Pesukim at the beginning of the 5th Aliyah are a continuation of the theme of this week's Parsha; Teshuva. The Mitzvah is Teshuva. Maybe you will say the commandment of Teshuva is too challenging. How can I possibly fulfill every Halacha and get a full Teshuva? Me being such a sinner and a

lowlife how could I possibly come close to Hashem? Says Hashem when it first came up into my mind to create the Jewish people, I also had an idea to create Teshuva. The Midrash Tanchuma on Parashat Nitzavim explicitly connects the creation of Teshuva with the Jewish people. It says that Teshuva was created for the Jewish people because God knew they would sin and would need a way to return to Him. So we see its innate in every Jew to have the ability to do Teshuva. Hashem just wants your heart, he wants you

to try a small bit. The Gemarah in Sanhedrin 106b says: "The Merciful One desires the heart." רַחֲמֵנָּה לְבָא בְּעֵי הַחַיִּים. The Midrash (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 5:2) says: "Open for me an opening the size of a needle's eye, and I will open for you an opening the size of a great hall." פְּתַחֵי לִי פֶתַח כְּפֶתַח שֶׁל מַחֲסֵי, וְאֲנִי אֶפְתַּח לְךָ פֶתַח כְּפֶתַחוֹ שֶׁל אוֹלָם." This Midrash explains that even the smallest effort to come closer to God, like opening the "door" just a tiny bit, is reciprocated by

God in a magnified way, opening the way to immense spiritual growth. This is further emphasized by the last Pesukim, 'But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.' Hashem just wants your mouth- Vidui- confessing your sins and your heart- Charatah- a sincere and honest reflection of your actions. Its my blessing that on Rosh Hashanah we should take these messages to heart and internalize that Hashem wants small steps and he wants us to come close to him.

- Q**
- Where in the written Torah text does it tell us explicitly that the first day of Tisrei is Rosh Hashanah?
  - We eat apples dipped in honey to symbolize a sweet year. Why do we choose apples above other sweet fruits?
  - What two blessings do we say before sounding the shofar?
  - What three barren women were "remembered" by Hashem on Rosh Hashanah?
  - A person's yearly allowance is fixed on Rosh Hashanah, except for three types of expenses. What are they?

- A**
- Nowhere. The Torah calls it "a day of shofar blowing." (This is one of many examples showing how our observance depends on the continuous oral tradition dating back to Mount Sinai). (Bamidbar 29:1)
  - Isaac blessed Jacob with the words: "The fragrance of my son is like the fragrance of a field which Hashem has blessed..." (Bereishis 27:27). The Talmud identifies this "field" as an apple orchard. (Ta'anis 29b, Biyur Hagra)
  - "Blessed are You... who has commanded us to hear the sound of the shofar," and the shehechyanu blessing. (Orach Chaim 581:2)
  - Sara, Rachel and Chana. On Rosh Hashanah it was decreed that these barren women would bear children. (Tractate Rosh Hashanah 10b)
  - Expenses for Shabbos, Yom Tov, and the cost of one's children's Torah education. (Ba'er Hetaiv Orach Chaim 242:1)

# NEW YEAR, NEW YOU, GET INVOLVED

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays & Shabbat
<p>11am-1pm   Girls <b>LEADERSHIP PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rebbetzin Halberstadt</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>BAT MITZVAH PROGRAM</b> <i>By Tali Duwek</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>BAR MITZVAH PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rabbi Tavil</i></p> <hr/> <p>5:45pm   Boys <b>CHAZANUT PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rabbi Baadani</i></p> <hr/> <p>6pm   Boys <b>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p>	<p>10am   Ladies <b>YOGA CLASS</b> <i>By Talya Rose</i></p> <hr/> <p>11am   Ladies <b>CAFFEINE FOR THE SOUL</b> <i>By Rebbetzin Halberstadt</i></p> <hr/> <p>1-2pm   Hasmoo Boys <b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>7-10pm   Girls <b>6TH FORM PROGRAM</b> Chavrusa, Dinner &amp; Shiur <i>By Miri Klass</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>19+ GIRLS PROGRAM</b> Chavrusa, Dinner &amp; Shiur <i>By Rebbetzin Halberstadt</i></p>	<p>12pm   UCL Boys <b>1-2-1 LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Rabbi Markovic</i></p> <hr/> <p>1-2pm   Hasmoo Boys <b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>4:30-6pm   Boys Y12 <b>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rabbi Fisher</i></p> <hr/> <p>8pm   Lads <b>CHAVRUTA NIGHT</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>8-10pm   YP <b>YOUNG PROFESSIONALS EVENING</b> <i>By Rabbi Tavil and Raya Tavil</i></p>	<p>10am-12pm   Mothers <b>MOTHER &amp; BABY PROGRAM</b> With Music</p> <hr/> <p>1-2pm   JFS Boys <b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>1-2pm   Immanuel Girls <b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Miri Klass</i></p> <hr/> <p>4:30-6pm   Boys Y9 <b>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rabbi Fisher and Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>8pm   Lads <b>LADS CHAVRUTA PROGRAM</b> with Dinner <i>By Rabbi Stone and Rabbi Tavil</i></p>	<p>1-2pm   Immanuel Boys <b>LUNCH &amp; LEARN</b> <i>By Rabbi Tavil and Jacob Boyden</i></p> <hr/> <p>4:30-6pm   Hasmoo Boys <b>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM</b> <i>By Rabbi Fisher</i></p> <hr/> <p>6-7pm   Boys <b>KRAV MAGA</b></p> <hr/> <p>8pm   Boys Y10 <b>AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM</b> <i>By Jacob Boyden</i></p>	<p><b>WEEKLY MINYAN</b> With Delicious Kiddush</p> <hr/> <p><b>FRIDAY NIGHT DINNERS</b> Students, Young Professionals, Community</p>



*Wishing the community a Shana tova*  
**FROM THE TAL TEAM**