

Rosh Hashanah - Jewish New Year



Shana Tova U'Metuka
Festival greetings to Jewish friends for Rosh Hashanah,
and a wish for all the goodness and sweetness of the new year.

Rosh Hashana – Jewish New Year begins.

If I may share one brief thought: it is simply to marvel at the deeply human, and religious, instinct for RENEWAL.

With Rosh Hashana, the Jewish liturgical calendar sets aside special days as a time to ‘start life afresh’. The festival ushers in a holy period of introspection and repentance; a time to acknowledge one’s shortcomings, to forgive and be forgiven, to make amends and to renew one’s life.

An audacious message of Rosh Hashana is: not only can human beings *know* of their need to repent, not only can they *desire* to be better people, but they can actually set about to *make it happen*. Far from being ‘wishful thinking’, Rosh Hashana, along with the Days of Awe that continue in its wake, is a call to take responsibility for one’s life. It is undertaken in the larger context of community life, and with full acknowledgement that the Creator and Sovereign of the world continues to renew creation and calls human beings to account for their decisions and actions. Despite the fragility and difficulties of our lives, we are called to live the gift of each day as fully and as authentically as we possibly can.

It is a bold calling! For there is no shortage of excuses by which human beings can 'give in' to the sufferings and injustices of life. How easy it is to blame others for the troubled state of the world around us!

Rosh Hashana resists that path and points to an alternative way. It hears that inner voice that says: not only *should* things be different, but they *can* be so... starting with me. Together, let's start afresh and make this coming year truly good and filled with the sweetness of G-d's justice and mercy.

Other religious traditions have their particular and beautiful ways of expressing such a conviction and commitment. As Rosh Hashana commences, we can be grateful for the Jewish tradition and its unique way of embodying the divine invitation to 'walk with' G-d and each other.

A prayer

Sovereign of the universe! We give thanks and pray for Jewish communities everywhere during their High Holy Days. Bless them with continuing vitality and strength in their covenantal life with You, and with good health, safety and happiness for their families and loved ones. Amen.

Light of Torah is a Sydney-based grassroots ministry encouraging Christians to better appreciate the Jewish tradition and to reflect on Torah with the help of Jewish insights. [More...](#)

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