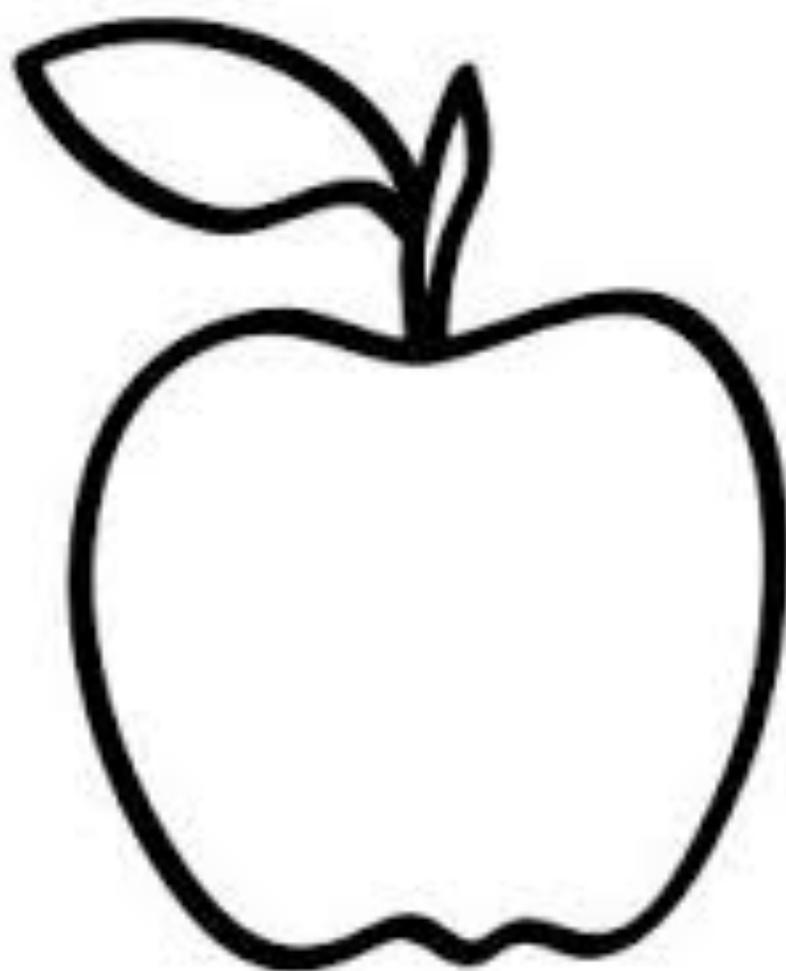


# A Rosh Hashanah Seder

תשפ"א - 5781



*An old tradition that's kind of new*

Welcome to the first online TBM Rosh Hashanah Seder. To prepare for this experience (which normally takes place on Erev Rosh Hashanah, just before the festive meal) you will need the following foods on hand, enough for each person at the table:

Wine, challah, dates, pomegranate (kernels), apples, honey, beets (I prefer beet crackers) leeks (or green onions), gourd, a ceremonial fish head (we used to serve sardines, but now we have adapted and use either Swedish fish or goldfish crackers).

Here are two of my favorite recipes to use this night: **Leek Confit**

1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter  
4 large leeks (white and pale green parts only), halved lengthwise, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices (about 5 cups)  
2 tablespoons water  
1/2 teaspoon salt

Melt butter in large pot over medium-low heat. Add leeks; stir to coat. Stir in water and salt. Cover pot; reduce heat to low. Cook until leeks are tender, stirring often, about 25 minutes. Uncover and cook to evaporate excess water, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve warm. DO AHEAD: Can be made 1 week ahead. Keep chilled. Rewarm before using.

Source: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/leek-confit-350099>

### **Spicy Roasted Squash Soup**

12 lb butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeded  
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh jalapeño chile, including seeds  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
7 cups chicken broth or water  
5 cups water plus additional for thinning  
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice, or to taste

Put squash, cut sides down, in 2 greased shallow baking pans and roast in upper and lower thirds of oven, switching position of pans halfway through roasting, until very tender, about 1 1/4 hours. Cool and scoop out flesh.

Purée squash in batches in a blender with jalapeño, cumin, and broth until very smooth (add additional water as needed to facilitate puréeing). Transfer to a 6- to 8-quart heavy pot and stir in 5 cups water. Simmer, stirring, 10 minutes, then stir in lemon juice, enough water to thin to desired consistency, and salt and pepper to taste.

Serve soup in bowls (*topped with slices of toast spread with pesto-see link for the rest of recipe*)

Source: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/spicy-roasted-squash-soup-with-pumpkin-seed-pesto-104548>

## Rosh HaShanah Seder



The *Rosh HaShanah seder* is a 2,000 year old *Sephardic* custom that is still practiced today. Let us join together to add meaning to this Holy Day by associating our hopes for the New Year with a variety of symbolic foods, called *Simanim*, over which we offer blessings.

We begin with a unique New Year greeting uttered in many *Sephardic* and *Mizrahi* communities:

תִּזְקוּ לְשָׁנִים רַבּוֹת!

*Tizku l'shanim rabot!*

May you merit many years!

*Mah nishtanah halaila hazeh?* Why is this night different from all other nights? True, this phrase has a specific meaning at another *seder*, but tonight there is an added meaning.

In a different year, we would have rightly called this holy night, *Yom HaZikaron*, a day of remembrance. Tonight, the name remains the same: we remember what it was like before the coronavirus, as we pray that God remembers us for healing and for hope.

In a different year, we might have eaten quickly, so that we could be at services for this special evening that ushers in the New Year. Tonight, we linger in our homes, protecting ourselves, our loved ones, and our extended family of families.

In a different year, our prayers, coming out of our mouths, would be our primary focus. Tonight, special foods, coming into our mouths, will be our primary focus.

תַּחֵל שָׁנָה וּבְרַכּוֹתֶיהָ!

*Tachel shanah u'virchoteha!*

### Candles

First, we kindle the lights which not only remind us that *Rosh HaShanah* is here, but also that tonight is *Shabbat* as well.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ  
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שַׁבָּת וְשֵׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

*Baruch Ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvota:  
v'tzivanu, l'hadlik neir shel shabbat v'shel yom tov.*



## Wine

The commandment to bless wine is a commandment to drink life as deeply as we drink from this very cup.

It is a commandment to bless life and to love deeply.

It is a commandment to give thanks and to offer appreciation.

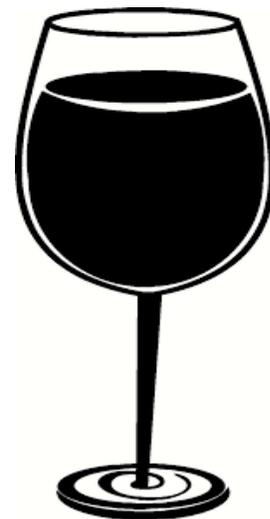
To laugh until we are all laughter,

To sing until we are all song,

To dance until we are all dance,

To love until we all love

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל עַם  
וְרוֹמְמָנוּ מִכָּל לָשׁוֹן וְקִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וַתִּתֶּן לָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ  
בְּאַהֲבָה אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת הַזֶּה וְאֶת יוֹם הַזְּכוֹרֹן הַזֶּה, יוֹם זְכוֹרוֹן  
תְּרוּעָה בְּאַהֲבָה מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ זֵכֶר לִיְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֵרְתָּ  
וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וַיְדַבֵּרְךָ אֱמֶת וְקִיָּם לְעַד. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה  
יְהוָה, מֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ מְקִדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְיוֹם הַזְּכוֹרוֹן.



*Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei pri hagafen.*

*Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher bachar banu mikol am, v'romemanu mikol lashon, v'kidshanu b'mitzvotav. Vatiten lanu Adonai Eloheinu b'ahavah et yom hashabbat hazeh v'et yom hazikaron hazeh yom zichron t'ruah b'ahavah mikra kodesh, zecher litziat mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta v'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim. Ud'varcha emet v'kayam la'ad. Baruch Ata Adonai, melech al kol ha'arets, m'kadeish hashabbat v'Yisrael v'yom hazikaron.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
שֶׁחַיֵּינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

*Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam,  
shehecheyanu, v'kiyemanu, v'higiyanu lazman hazeh*

We praise, You, *Adonai*, our God, for giving us life, sustaining us, and enabling us to reach this day.



## Challah

It is traditional to have a round challah for Rosh Hashanah. There are many reasons for the special shape. The most common one is that it represents the cyclical nature of our lives. Others feel it represents a crown for God, or the infinite and mighty power attributed to God. Many round challot (plural for challah) are studded with dried fruit, to symbolize wishes for sweetness and sustenance. Maybe the best reason for the shape is that it elevates the challah for this magnificent holiday and reminds us that this night should stand apart from other nights.



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

*Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.*



### Lessons from the Sages...

The *Talmud* teaches us that certain foods, eaten on *Rosh HaShanah*, remind us of our hopes for the coming year. We taste dates, a head of a fish, pomegranate seeds, leeks, beets, and gourd, as well as apples and honey. Each item is a symbol of renewal. Each offers us a taste of hope. Each is a symbol of the potential within us to bring meaning and joy to the coming year.

— Talmud Horayot 12a

## Dates

We begin the tasting part of our *seder* with the date. The date represents our wish for peace and connection. With anticipation, we look forward to many “dates” in the future that will bring us the delight we remember so fondly.

The date when we will not just see, but hold and embrace, our loved ones.

The date when we will reschedule our events, surrounded by family and friends.

The date when our children will return to school and our routines will resume.

The date when we will travel to places near and far, by train and by plane.

The date when we will dine inside our favorite restaurants, and perhaps  
even go to a concert or movie.

The date—**may it come soon**—

when we will join our bodies and voices together in our holy sanctuary.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

*Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam borei p'ri haetz.*

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ,

שְׂיִתְמוּ שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ וְאוֹיְבֵינוּ.

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha, Adonai Eloheinu*

*Veilohei avoteinu v'imoteinu,*

*sh'yitamu soneinu v'oiveinu.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*, our God and  
God of our ancestors, that You will be with us on  
that date when normalcy returns.

*(Eat a date)*



## Pomegranate

According to the sages, a pomegranate has 613 seeds in it. This is the exact number of *mitzvot* in the *Torah*. On this night of beginnings, there is no need to count the seeds of the pomegranate, but to recognize that the seeds remind us to aspire to perform numerous *mitzvot* in the days to come.

In the coming year, may we ...

Plant seeds of connection, study and thought.

Plant seeds of gratitude and awareness.

Plant seeds of abiding truth and steadfast friendship.

Plant seeds of achieving equality and demanding justice.

Plant seeds of care for our environment and our global health.

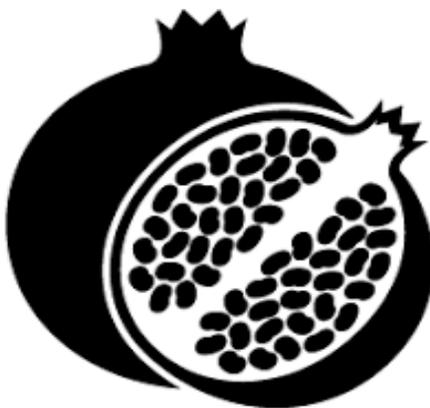
Plant seeds of enduring patience and a deepening love.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,  
שֶׁתַּרְבֶּה זְכוּיֹתֵינוּ כְּרִמּוֹן.

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu Veilohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, sh'tarbeh z'chuyoteinu k'rimon.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*, our God and God  
of our ancestors, that we will be full of good deeds just as the pomegranate is filled with seeds.

*(eat a pomegranate)*



## Apples with Honey

The final taste of our *Rosh HaShanah seder* is the one associated with this season, honey. After months at arduous and meticulous work, the honeybees have concluded their production and the sweetness they created will be a treat for us over the course of many months to come.

As we look around the rooms in which we sit at this moment...

And as we look at the faces of the people on this Zoom...

And as we gaze at the pictures of those we cherish most in the frames on our mantels...

We pause to meditate about our loved ones and the moments and the values that are most sweet to us.

But let us not forget that this sweetness is not just to be tasted or experienced, it is also something to be created.

In a world filled with illness, polarization, inequality, and hatred, let us be the agents of change who will bring a renewed sense of sweetness, justice, health and connection to the New Year.



יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ  
שֶׁתְּחַדֵּשׁ עֲלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu Veilohei avoteinu v'imoteinu  
shetichadesh aleinu shanah tova u'metukah.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*, our God and God of our ancestors,  
that You renew for us a year that is good and sweet.

*(Dip apple in honey and eat)*

## Gourd

A gourd grows round and full, swelling with richness and color. The seeds of a gourd contain so much potential, and with time, sun and water, this root vegetable represents the harvest of the fall.

On *Rosh HaShanah* it is written and on *Yom Kippur* it is sealed:

Who shall look for toilet paper and who for Clorox wipes.

Who shall social distance and who shall elbow bump.

Who shall speak to a loved one through a window and who shall speak by Zoom.

Who shall wear a mask and who shall need a ventilator.

Who shall reschedule a wedding and who shall be alone for a funeral.

These past few months have taught us that some things are in our hands to control, while other things, we learn, through much effort and pain, are not at all in our control. Experience is a great teacher when it helps us realize that the fullness of life, actually, is right here and right now.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,  
שֶׁתִּקְרַע רוּעַ גְּזֵר דֵּינֵנוּ, וְיִקְרְאוּ לְפָנֶיךָ זְכוּיֹתֵנוּ.

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu*

*Veilohei avoteinu v'imoteinu, sh'tikra ro'ah g'zar dineinu,*

*v'yikar'u l'fanecha z'chuyoteinu.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*, our God and God of our  
ancestors, that harsh judgments  
be eliminated and our blessings be plenty.

*(Eat some gourd)*



## Leek

There is a story of the very famous sage, Rabbi Meir, who was frustrated by the many gangs in his neighborhood determined to bring terror. Rabbi Meir prayed for them to die so that peace would be restored. His wife, Beruriah, heard his prayer and stopped him saying, “do not pray that they should die, rather that their evil ways should die.”

— Talmud Berachot 10a

The leek, in Hebrew, *karti*, is connected to the Hebrew word, *karet*, which means “to cut off.” Our prayer is that people should not be “cut off” but that their evil deeds like lying and greed be “cut off.”

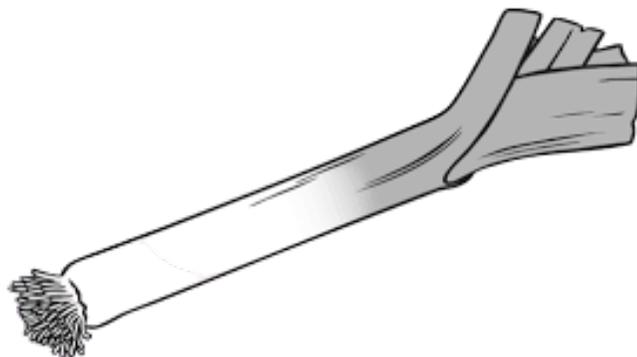
יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂיִכָּרְתוּ שׁוֹנְאֵינוּ.

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu Veilohai avoteinu v'imoteinu, sh'yikartu soneinu.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*, our God and God of our ancestors, that we are fortunate to keep the hateful things away from us.

Like as we eat this leek, may our luck never lack in the year to come.

*(Eat some leek)*



## Beet

Many vegetables are red, but none are quite like the beet. There is nothing bland about a beet. Its flavor is unmistakable. Its texture is neither mushy nor hard, but delicate. Its redness is one of passion. A passionate redness that remains on our fingertips long after we have eaten it.

There is a story about a man who dies and is greeted by Elijah, the prophet.

“Where are you going?” asks Elijah.

“The world to come,” replies the man.

“Show me your scars,” says Elijah.

“I am pure and unblemished,” brags the man.

With a tear, Elijah asks, “Did you have nothing worth fighting for?”

The beet reminds us of the many passions in our lives.

Our family.

Our country.

Our values.

Our people.

Our faith.

On *Rosh HaShanah*, we are mindful of the many passions in our lives worth fighting for.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂיִסְתַּלְקוּ אוֹיְבֵינוּ וּמִשְׂטָיִנוּ.



*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu*

*Veilohei avoteinu v'imoteinu,*

*sh'yistalku oiveinu u'mastineinu.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*,  
our God and God of our ancestors,  
that we leave behind all things that hold us back  
and that we fight for our passions.

*(Eat a beet)*

## Fish head or another “head”

The seder calls for a fish head to symbolize our wish to be heads, not tails; leaders not stragglers. At this time of new beginnings, we challenge ourselves not to be complacent, not to be passive, and not to be resigned. The world calls us to action, to establish initiatives, and to create an impact. Let our resolve be strengthened to make our families more connected, our relationships more engaging, and our communities more supportive.

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאֲמוֹתֵינוּ  
שֶׁנִּהְיֶה לְרֹאשׁ וְלֹא לְזָנָב

*Yehi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu veilohei  
avoteinu v'imoteinu, sh'nihiyeh l'rosh v'lo l'zanav.*

May it be Your will, *Adonai*,  
our God and God of our ancestors,  
that we will be like the head and not the tail.

*(Taste what you have symbolized as “the head”)*

**Song: *B'sefer Chayim***

בְּסֵפֶר חַיִּים בְּרַחַה וְשָׁלוֹם וּפְרִנְסָה טוֹבָה נִזְכָּר וְנִכְתָּב לְפָנֶיךָ  
אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל עַמֶּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְלְשָׁלוֹם.

*B'sefer chayim b'rachah v'shalom u'farnasah tovah, nizacheir v'nikateiv  
l'fanecha. anachnu v'chol amcha beit Yisrael l'chayim tovim u'l'shalom...*

Let us, and the whole family of Israel, be remembered and inscribed in the Book of Life, Blessing, Peace and Prosperity

## Final Prayer

Our God and God of our ancestors, may we know Your blessings in the year five thousand, seven hundred eighty one (5781) or in Hebrew תשפ"א.

Eternal One, bless us and the whole House of Israel with renewed life, happiness and peace, comfort and courage, resilience and strength.



תִּזְקוּ לְשָׁנִים רַבּוֹת!

*Tizku l'shanim rabot!*

May you merit many years!



תְּקִיעָה!

*Tekiah!*

The *shofar* is sounded!

Temple  
Beth Miriam



This service was inspired by Rabbi Ari Goldstein

Adapted by Stella Jeruzalmi Stanway

[www.bethmiriam.org](http://www.bethmiriam.org)