

“What’s New?”

Psalm 98:1-4; Isaiah 12:1-4; Matthew 13:4



Everyone likes something shiny and new. That is why the concept of a “new year” us. It is an opportunity to start over. The Jewish people in their calendar have 4 “new year” starts.

A Jewish man begins Rosh Hashanah by blowing a shofar.

Sept. 25, 2022

Psalm 98:1-4 [ESV]

1 «*A Psalm.*» Oh sing to the LORD a **new song**, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.

2 The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.

3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 **Make a joyful noise** to the LORD, all the earth; break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

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Rosh Hashanah is one of the most mysterious High Holy days in the Jewish calendar. The Hebrew words “Rosh Hashanah” only appear once in the Bible and the context is unclear.

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The festival itself seems to represent a culmination of the new moon festivals of the Jewish people. The new moon feast was held each month. The 7th new moon began on 1 Tishri [Sept.-Oct.].

The traditions of Rosh Hashanah are represented here.

Sept. 25, 2022

Psalm 81:2-3 [ESV]

2 Raise a song; sound the tambourine, the sweet lyre with the harp.

3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon, at the full moon, on our feast day.

Leviticus 25:9 [ESV]

9 Then you shall sound the loud trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month. On the Day of Atonement you shall sound the trumpet throughout all your land.

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The king’s court generally met for the monthly council during the new moon feast. The 7th of these which would be the 1st of Tishri would be considered a high holy day.

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The blowing of the shofar begins the holy day.

This holiday is a mixture of joy and sadness. The 10 day is Yom Kippur [Day of Atonement]. The 1st 10 days of Tishri are called the Days of Awe.

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The blowing of the shofar begins the holy day.

The original name of this holy day is “the day of blowing trumpets [shofars]” It is also given the name in Scripture of “a day of Remembrance.”

Leviticus 23:24 [ESV]

23 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

24 "Speak to the people of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a day of solemn rest, a memorial proclaimed with **blast of trumpets**, a holy convocation.

25 You shall not do any ordinary work, and you shall present a food offering to the LORD."

26 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,...

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The blowing of the shofar begins the holy day.

For Jewish people, these days are taken up with renouncing sin and failure and doing restitution. It is believed that God determines who will be inscribed in the Book of Life on these days.

Isaiah 12:1-4 [ESV]

1 You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me. 2

"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation." 3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

4 And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.



The "Tashlik" ceremony depicted in Russia in 1886

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The “Tashlik” ceremony
depicted in Russia in 1886

Just before Rosh Hashanah in the late afternoon certain eastern European Jewish sects gather at a large bodies of water to symbolically cast their sins into the “deep” prior to the Days of Awe in preparation for their examination by God.

Numbers 29:1 [ESV]

1 "On the first day of the seventh month you shall have a holy convocation. You shall not do any ordinary work. It is a day for you to blow the trumpets, 2 and you shall offer a burnt offering, for a pleasing aroma to the LORD: one bull from the herd, one ram, seven male lambs a year old without blemish; 3 also their grain offering of fine flour mixed with oil, three tenths of an ephah for the bull, two tenths for the ram, 4 and one tenth for each of the seven lambs; 5 with one male goat for a sin offering, to make atonement for you; 6 besides the burnt offering of the new moon, and its grain offering, and the regular burnt offering and its grain offering, and their drink offering, according to the rule for them, for a pleasing aroma, a food offering to the LORD.

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The
representation
of the 4 Jewish
NewYears

The 1st of Nisan [March-April] The annual year.

The 1st of Elul [August-September] Tithe of livestock due this day.

The 15th of Shevat [January-February] is the “new year of trees”.

The 1st of Tishri [September-October] “Beginning Again”.

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Sept. 25, 2022

Ezekiel 40:1-4 [ESV]

1 In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at **the beginning of the year**, on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on that very day, the hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me to the city. 2 In visions of God he brought me to the land of Israel, and set me down on a very high mountain, on which was a structure like a city to the south. 3 When he brought me there, behold, there was a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring reed in his hand. And he was standing in the gateway. 4 And the man said to me, "Son of man, look with your eyes, and hear with your ears, and set your heart upon all that I shall show you, for you were brought here in order that I might show it to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel."

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The
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It is interesting that the Year of Jubilee was to be proclaimed on Tishri the 10th or Yom Kippur every 50th year. This probably why the creation of the world was connected with Rosh Hashanah.

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For Jewish people it was the close of the tithe and recognition of the Kingship of the LORD over them as a people. In Ezekiel 40 this chapter begins a long prophesy of the Messianic Kingdom.

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This Jewish New Year card likely from around the year 1917 depicts Czar Nicholas as the sacrificial chicken used by Easter Jewish sects to celebrate Yom Kippur.

For Jewish people this celebration foretold the end of the world when God’s justice would be meted out on the unjust.

Matthew 13:52 [ESV]

51 "Have you understood all these things?" They said to him, "Yes."

52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is **new** and what is **old**."

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Harold Copping 1920s “Parable of the Dragnet” from Matthew 13.

In Matthew 13 Jesus tells several parables about the end of the world. The end of the world is signaled with the “trumpet of the Archangel”.



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This New Year postcard is from after 1948, the declaration of Israel as a nation.

The establishment of Israel in 1948 shocked the entire world. Christians have since been expecting the Coming of Christ. Rosh Hashanah speaks to this promise.

Colossians 2:16-19 [ESV]

16 Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. 17 These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.

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As Christians we are not called to replicate Jewish custom or ritual but to understand it as a reflection or shadow of God’s purpose and plan.

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A new sense of urgency hangs over the world. Christ is coming and it likely soon.

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