

NCYI Youth Groups Rosh HaShanah

Rosh Hashanah

http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/4752/jewish/Rosh-Hashanah.htm

Put those party hats away! Getting the year started is serious business!

New Year's day is for us Jews not a time for frivolous rejoicing, but rather a solemn day of prayer. It is the Day of Memorial when all creatures of the earth are remembered by the Creator and judged according to their merits.

Yet, solemn and awe-inspiring though this day is, we know that the Supreme judge of the universe is kind and merciful. He is not out to punish us, but merely wants us to follow the laws and regulations He laid down for us for our own good. He has made this Day of Judgment a day of forgiveness and mercy.



Courtesy Farbrengen Magazine

Rosh Hashanah does not find us unprepared. In the month of *Elul* the approach of *Rosh Hashanah* was heralded by the daily sounding of the *shofar* in the synagogue (except Saturdays). During the month of *Elul* the Jew is particularly careful in the observance of the religious precepts --he takes more time for his prayers, he finds himself overflowing with charity and lovingkindness, and resolutely determines to cast away his evil ways and habits of the past.

And a wonderful feeling grips the heart of the true repenter, as if a magic hand has removed the heavy burden that has been weighing upon it in the past. It is the feeling of being able to begin life anew, like a newly born innocent child, with no blemish on his record.

Such is the feeling that the Jew brings with him into the synagogue on the first night of *Rosh Hashanah*. He finds himself close to G-d, with his prayers pouring out from the very depth of his heart.

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Step Right Up <http://www.aish.com/h/hh/fs/48970866.html>



A Rosh Hashana Story

by [Nesanel Yoel Safran](#)

Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, is a holiday dedicated to personal growth. It's a special time that God gives us to grow even better people over the coming year. The most effective way to do this is not to try to improve everything about ourselves at once, but to just pick one or two small things and commit to doing them, one step at a time. Let's take advantage of the Rosh Hashana opportunity and have a happy, growth-filled New Year!

In our story, a kid harnesses the power of Rosh Hashana to grow one step at a time.

Lisa looked over her shoulder and noticed her roommate, Judy sitting at her desk, busily writing out what looked like a shopping list.

"Hey, Judy, if you're going to the store can I add one or two things?"

"Huh?"

"To your shopping list. I just need a couple of things from the store to bring home with me for Rosh Hashana vacation and I really don't have time to go."

"This isn't a shopping list, silly." Judy laughed.

"So what is it, then?" asked Lisa.

"Weren't you in class today when the teacher told us all about how on Rosh Hashana we're supposed to improve ourselves?"

"Sure I was. So?"

"So...this is my Rosh Hashana list. I just wrote out 20 things I'm going to totally change about myself, starting Rosh Hashana. Here, listen..." Judy held her list, sat up straight and proudly began:

- "1) I'm never going to lie again.
- 2) I'm never going to oversleep again.
- 3) I'm going to always be in a good mood.

- 4) I'm never going to—ahem—use my roommate's stuff without asking first.
- 5) I'm never..."

"Wait a minute, Judy," Lisa cut in.

"What's the matter?" asked Judy, "If you're mad about number four, you don't have to worry. I said I'm never going to do it again."

"No, it's not *that*," said Lisa. "It's just that your list is making me dizzy. It's impossible to do all that stuff so fast and at one time." Judy put down her list as Lisa went on. "Sure, Rosh Hashana's about growth -- but not all at once. It's great that you want to improve, but this is way too much at one time. You just need to commit to one small step at a time, and stick to it, that's all."

"So, what's on *your* Rosh Hashana list, then?" Judy asked, confused.

"Well, if you really want to know," Lisa smiled, "I just committed to doing at least one thing to help someone feel good every day."

"That's *it*?" Judy asked, amazed.

"Yeah, that's it. And if it goes okay, in another month or so, I might commit to doing one *more* thing each day."

Judy looked upset. "Well, I think you'll never get anywhere that way. I'm sticking to my list and I *am* going to do it all at once. Wait and see!"

The kids went home for Rosh Hashana vacation. A few weeks later, when Lisa first arrived back in her school dorm room, Judy was sitting on Lisa's bed, munching on one of Lisa's granola bars. When the girl noticed her come in, she jumped up and hid the bar behind her back.

"Oh, hi." Judy said nervously. "I'm sorry, I, um, must have gotten our beds mixed up or something..." Then she hung her head and took her hand with the half-eaten bar from behind her back. "Oh Lisa, I can't believe it. I just broke another two of my Rosh Hashana resolutions at one time. Not only did I take your things without asking -- I just lied about it too! In fact," she sniffed, "I haven't been able to stick to any of my resolutions. I guess it really was too much. Can you ever forgive me?"

Lisa was about to tell Judy off and to say 'I told you so.' But then she remembered her own Rosh Hashana commitment -- to help someone feel better once a day. Forgiving Judy would certainly make her feel better. She smiled and said, "It's okay, Judy. I know you're sorry and I forgive you. So just enjoy the snack and have a happy New Year!"

Questions Ages 3-5:

Q. How did Judy feel at first about Lisa's idea of just trying to do just one thing better at a time?

A. She didn't like the idea and felt she could do it all at once.

Q. How did she feel in the end?

A. She saw how trying to do too much at once wouldn't work.

Ages 6-9:

Q. What life lesson do you think someone could learn from this story?

A. One thing is, that the path of self-growth is best accomplished by taking one small step at a time and committing to it, rather than trying to do too much at once, which usually leads to giving up and doing nothing at all.

Q. Why do you think Judy failed to stick to her self-improvement commitments?

A. Often, when we see things about ourselves we would like to change and feel inspired to do so, we are tempted to try to do it all 'overnight'—like Judy did. While this is a positive feeling, it is unrealistic to expect to change deeply ingrained patterns in ourselves so quickly. Making positive growth-changes in ourselves is one of life's greatest goals and like any major goal, we can best succeed by taking measured, steady steps.

Spiritual exercise: Between now and Rosh Hashanah, think of and commit to one small thing you can do that will help you grow in a positive direction and begin doing it.

Ages ten and up:

Q. In your opinion, is self-searching and seeking things about ourselves that need improving, an activity that will lead to happiness or depression? Why?

A. It all depends on our outlook and approach. If we think of ourselves as 'bad' for having these less-than-perfect traits and behavior patterns, focusing on them is likely to bring us down and this type of thinking is best avoided. However if we realize the deeper truth, that God put each of us into the world with our own custom 'portfolio' of character strengths and weaknesses. He gave us the life mission of taking this portfolio and trying to 'turn a profit' by directing our strengths toward meaningful pursuits and chipping away at our weaknesses—slowly and steadily—to improve, then doing this is the most deeply soul-satisfying and joyful activity possible—for it's fulfilling our life's mission!

Q. Our sages teach that 'grabbing too much is like grabbing nothing.' What do you think this means?

A. It is human nature that when we have our sights on a worthwhile goal that we want to grab it *all* and to grab it now. However, our sages are revealing to us a precious secret; that this thinking is a trap and bound to eventually backfire. The secret to success and accomplishment in any realm—physical or spiritual—is to move toward it in measured, consistent steps.

Spiritual exercise: Between now and Rosh Hashanah, think of and commit to *one small thing* you can do that will help you grow in a positive direction and begin doing it.

Published: Sunday, September 17, 2006

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I'm Sorry <http://www.aish.com/h/hh/f/s/48965761.html>



Adam accused Jonathan for taking his ball, even though he didn't know for sure that he took it.

by Rabbi Yair Kobernick

Adam came in the house very upset after yelling at his friend Jonathan and making him cry.

"I'm not going to be friends with Jonathan anymore," he told his Mom. "He took my new basketball and now it is lost. I'm really angry with him."

Adam's Mom tried to calm him down. "Did you see him take it?" she asked.

"No," said Adam, "but I left it outside not far from where Jonathan was standing, and when I came back it was gone."

"If you didn't actually see him take it, then you should not accuse him and say he did. Maybe it rolled away somewhere?"

"I already looked everywhere," said Adam.

"Will you look again?"

Sure enough, when Adam went to look a second time, he found the basketball in a bush on the side of the street.

"I found it," he told his Mom. "Everything is okay, I can still be friends with Jonathan. I guess he didn't take it after all."

"I'm glad to hear that," said his Mom.

"I'm going to play with ball for a little outside, okay?" asked Adam.

"Wait a minute, Adam -- I think you owe Jonathan an apology for causing him to cry. It is almost Yom Kippur you know."

"But Mom, I learned that on Yom Kippur God forgives us for everything. I'll just wait another few days and then I won't need to say I'm sorry to Jonathan."

"God does forgive us Adam," said his Mom, "but only when we've asked our friends for forgiveness first. I suggest that you go over to Jonathan's and say you're sorry. This is an excellent way for you to prepare for Yom Kippur."

Adam realized that his Mom was right. Even though it was hard, he went to find Jonathan so he could apologize to him.

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Q. What did Adam do that was wrong?

A. Adam accused Jonathan for taking his ball, even though he didn't know for sure that he took it.

Q. God doesn't forgive us on Yom Kippur for things we've done to our friends until we've apologized to them. Why do you think that is?

A. Because God wants us to fix up the hurt we've caused them.

Q. Do you think it is hard to say, "I'm sorry?" Why?

A. It is embarrassing that others will know we did wrong.

Published: Sunday, May 26, 2002

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The Pardon

http://www.chabad.org/kids/article_cdo/aid/4747/jewish/The-Pardon.htm

A king went hunting in the forest. Chasing after a deer, he went deep into the woods, and when he looked around, he found himself alone. He began to look for a way out of the woods, and for the road which would lead him back to his city and palace.

In his search he met some country folk, but nobody recognized him, or wanted to have anything to do with him. When he began to speak to them, they did not even understand what he was saying, nor did they care.

Wandering about in the woods for a long time, the king heard a fine melody that someone was playing on a flute. Following the sound, the king came across a man and engaged him in conversation. The man recognized the king at once, and spoke to him with humility and respect.

The king saw that here was a man after his heart, and liked him at once. When he told the man that he was hoping to meet someone who would be able to lead him out of the woods and back to his palace and throne, the man was happy to do it and the king felt grateful to him. He invited him to his palace and gave him a place of honor among his royal counselors and advisers. Then he ordered costly garments for his friend, befitting his rank.

Some time later, the king's friend disobeyed the king. The king became very angry, and ordered him to appear before the royal court for trial. When the day of trial came, the king's friend took off his robes, and put on the simple clothes he wore on the day when he first met the king. He also took his flute with him, and appeared before the royal court very humble and repentant. Before passing judgment the king asked him if he had any request to make.

"Permit me, Your Majesty, to play a melody on my flute," the defendant asked, and his request was granted.

He played the beautiful melody that he had played on that day when he had met the king for the first time. The king remembered it well. At once that happy meeting came to his mind, when the stranger had made the king so happy, and led him out of the forest back to his palace. The king thereupon pardoned his friend and took him back into his grace and favor.

This story will help us understand a little better the meaning of the blowing of the *shofar*. For what happened to us is very similar to the story.

When G-d was about to give the Torah, he turned to various peoples, but no people on earth wanted to accept it. In the end G-d turned to our people, and we accepted Him and the Torah with the beautiful words of "*naaseh v'nishma*"-we will Do and Obey-a promise to fulfill G-d's commands without question. We took upon ourselves the Divine rule, and proclaimed G-d as the King of the whole world. This pleased G-d very much.

When *Rosh Hashanah* comes, and all our actions come before G-d and are weighed on the scale, the good deeds against the bad deeds during the whole year, we may rightly be worried what the outcome may be, if we were judged according to our merits.

We want G-d to be merciful to us and forgive us no matter what our record may have been in the past. Therefore we appear before G-d in the way we appeared before Him on that great day at Sinai. On that day the sound of the *shofar* was heard, and we sang the beautiful melody of "*naase v'nishma*."

Then G-d remembers that day and turns towards us with mercy and forgiveness, and our love for G-d and G-d's love for us becomes as strong as ever. Then we may be sure that we will be inscribed unto a New Year of good health and happiness.

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<http://www.aish.com/h/hh/f/s/48964446.html>

Dr. Mitzva and the Rosh Hashana Favor_



"What will we do on Rosh Hashana without a shofar? Dr. Mitzvah you are the only one who can help us!"

by Yaffa Ganz

"Dr. Mitzva looked out the window of his office. "Oh my," he said, "it's raining again. I'm so glad I can stay home today. Especially since I lent my rubber boots to Mr. Goldstein and Trudy Silverstone borrowed my umbrella. It's the perfect time to catch up on my mail." Dr. Mitzva sat back in his chair and began to open the tall pile of letters on his desk.

Dr. Emanuel J. Mitzva was a little man with a little mustache and a neat, pointy beard. You could always recognize him by his grey bowler hat and the red dotted bow tie on his shirt. If you turned left at the first corner of Cobblestone Lane in the little town of Cedarville, you saw his neatly lettered sign:



**DR. EMANUEL J. MITZVA, M.D.
Doctor of Mostly Everything**

And he was. He set broken fingers; cured sore throats; put an end to coughs and colds and earaches. He took care of plants and animals; babysat for cranky babies; sang songs to sick children and ran errands for elderly folks who couldn't go out. He also repaired broken dolls and fixed old clocks and showed people how to smile and be happy. If you needed help, you came to Dr. Mitzva. "After all," he would say, "if we don't help each other, then who shall we help?"

Everything Dr. Mitzva did was a mitzva - a kind deed to help people and make them happier. Even when it was a hard deed to do. But now he was sitting quietly at home reading his mail.

Dr. Mitzva picked up a large envelope with a colorful stamp. "Well, well! Here's a letter from my old friend Mr. Haddad in Afghanistan. I haven't seen him since he broke his glasses. He couldn't see the letters in the Torah Scroll without them. I got him a new pair and they solved the problem. I wonder if he broke his new pair now?" Dr. Mitzva put on his own glasses, cleared his throat and read:

To my dearest friend Dr. Mitzva, Shalom!

I hope you are in the best of health. Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, will soon be here and Jews all over the world are getting ready to blow the shofar. But our very old and precious shofar will not blow. The only sound it makes is a whoofy-poofy sort of sound, not at all the kind of sound a proper shofar is supposed to make. No one here has been able to fix

it. I know you are very busy and that Afghanistan is far away from Cedarville, but what will we do on Rosh Hashana without a shofar? You are the only one who can help us. Hoping to see you soon.

*With best wishes,
Your faithful friend,
Chaim ben Nachum Haddad*

"Oh dear," he thought, "I really am busy. And tired too. And Afghanistan is so far away." He looked out at the rain. "I don't even have my rubbers or my umbrella."

But then he remembered his friend Mr. Haddad and the shofar. "What could be wrong with it?" thought Dr. Mitzva. "I suppose I shall have to go out into the rain after all. I would hate to disappoint Mr. Haddad. Especially before Rosh Hashana."

Not one to waste time, he put on his grey bowler hat, straightened up his red bow tie, took his bag, and hurried to the airport. Before you could say "Rosh Hashana", he was in the sky and on his way.



What a welcome he received in Afghanistan! The entire village came out to meet him.

"How kind of you to come so far," said Mr. Haddad. "We have prepared a small feast in your honor."

Dr. Mitzva smiled. "A small feast in Afghanistan takes at least three days," he said, "and I must be home by tomorrow evening. A glass of cold seltzer and a plateful of your wife's cookies is feast enough for me."

Dr. Mitzva drank the seltzer, ate the cookies and went straight to the synagogue. "Here is the shofar," said Mr. Haddad sadly. "We've been blowing away but not a sound comes out except a whoof and a poof."

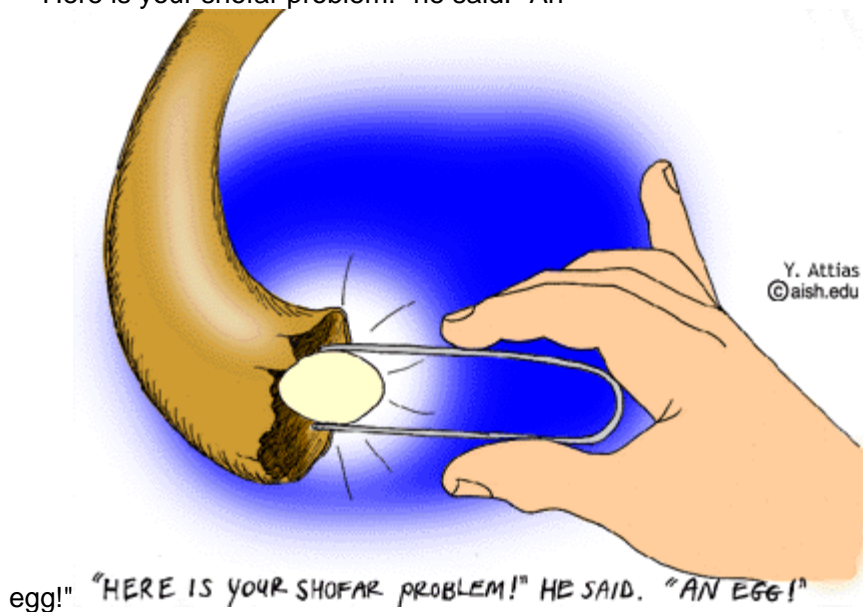
"My my, what a beauty!" said Dr. Mitzva. He shone a light inside the shofar. He peered into the narrow end you blow and he examined the wide end where the sound comes out. He tapped both ends and listened to the sounds with his stethoscope. Finally, he announced: "I shall have to operate!"

"To operate?" everyone asked. "On a shofar?"

"Yes. Something seems to be blocking the sound. I think that a little corrective surgery will fix it up."

Dr. Mitzva took his tools out of his bag. Two helpers held the shofar while he inserted a pair of long tongs inside the wide end. Slowly, carefully, he pulled out one small round bird's egg!

"Here is your shofar problem!" he said. "An



"An egg?? That's what comes of leaving the shofar uncovered on top of the Holy Ark!" said Mr. Haddad. "The synagogue is always full of birds. They sing while we pray. We keep the shofar inside the ark but this year we thought it would be a good idea to air it out. I suppose the birds saw it and decided it would be a safe place to lay an egg!"

Mr. Haddad put the shofar to his lips and blew. A long, deep, mellow sound came out - the very same sound which reminds the Jewish people all over the world that Rosh Hashana, the Day of Judgement, is here.

"I knew you could help," cried Mr. Haddad. "The shofar sounds perfect! How can we ever thank you?"

"You have thanked me enough," said Dr. Mitzva. "You gave me the chance to help. Helping people is a big mitzva! It makes the world a better, nicer place. And as I always say, if we don't help each other, then who shall we help? "

"Nonetheless, we must thank you," said Mr. Haddad. "A favor or a good deed must never be forgotten. Especially if someone comes all the way from Cedarville to Afghanistan to do it! Please do us the honor of taking a small gift as a token of our appreciation." He handed Dr. Mitzva a miniature shofar, much smaller than the big one he had fixed, but just the right size for a little man like himself.

"And now you must hurry home or you shall miss your plane," he said.

After more thank-you's and good wishes, Dr. Mitzva packed his shofar and his tongs together with some of Mrs. Haddad's cookies and climbed onto the donkey which was waiting to take him to the airport.

"Shalom and Leshana Tovah - have a good, blessed year!" everyone cried. "You and us and all the Jewish people everywhere!"

"With God's help, I am sure we will!" answered Dr. Mitzva. "I just hope it stopped raining in Cedarville. And off he rode, holding his bag, on his bumpy donkey-ride to the airport.

Rosh HaShanah Songs

From [Songs for Rosh Hashanah](#), by [Rivky Greenberger](#), [chinuch.org](#)

I hear the *shofar* sound; it's calling out to me
It's sending me a message and I must heed it's plea
It's telling me to wake up and do *teshuva* now
The *Yom Hadin* is here do *teshuva* now.

I hear the *shofar* sound; it's calling out to me
I think about the future and the person I want to be
To my parents I'll be respectful, I'll be nice to my family and friends
I'll help out with a smile and try to make amends.

I hear the *shofar* sound; the message reached my heart
I *daven* from my *siddur*, I'm trying to do my part
Hashem, the King of Kings please accept my *teshuva*
And grant me and the Jewish People,
A *Shana Tova U'metukah!*

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Dip the Apple

(to tune of "Clementine")

By [Esti Greenstein](#), [chinuch.org](#)

Dip the apple (תפוח)
 In the honey (דבש)
Make a bracha
 Loud and clear,
Leshana Tova Umesooka
 May you have a sweet New Year.

Father, Mother, sister brother,
 Gather 'round the table here.
L'shana Tova Umesooka
 May you have a sweet New Year!

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Rosh HaShanah Games

Rosh Hashanah

The Scale

Props:

- *Ten slips of paper, five of which each have a mitzva written on them, and five on which is written an aveira
- A scale (or a hanger with clips on the ends, or a person to hold out their hands and act like a scale)

Activity: Hide the scraps of paper around the room, and send the kids around to collect them all. When they're done, unwrap each one, and have the kids decide whether it is a mitzva or an aveira. Put each one on the appropriate side of the scale, and point out how it tips back and forth. At the end it's tied.

Discussion: Oh no, how can we tip the scale to the mitzva side? What mitzvah can we do? Let's make a bracha together, daven, say thanks to someone, etc.

Courtesy of parshaactivities.com

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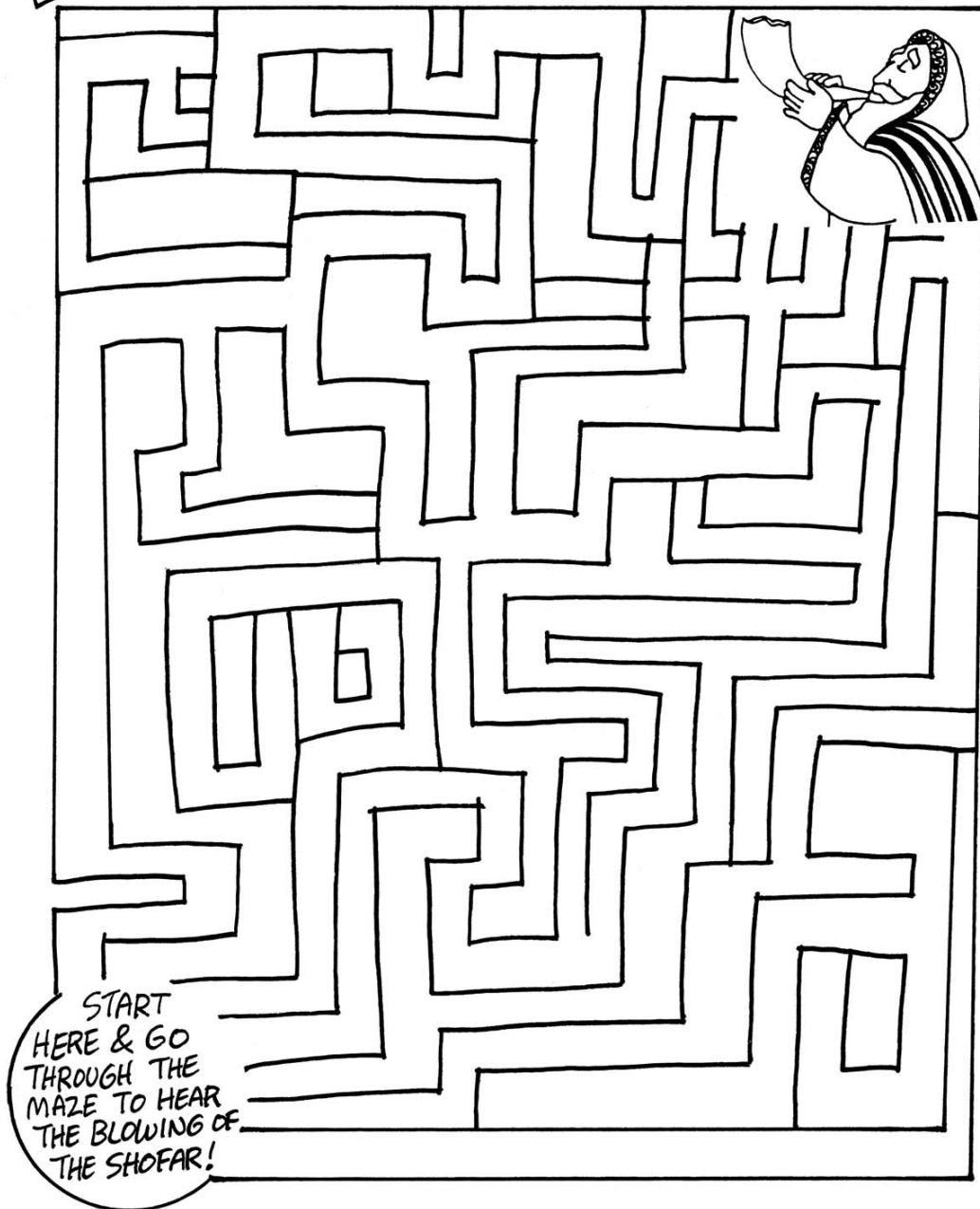
Rosh HaShanah Questions Sheets

Can be found on the following website:

<http://chinuch.org>

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ROSH HASHANAH MAZE!



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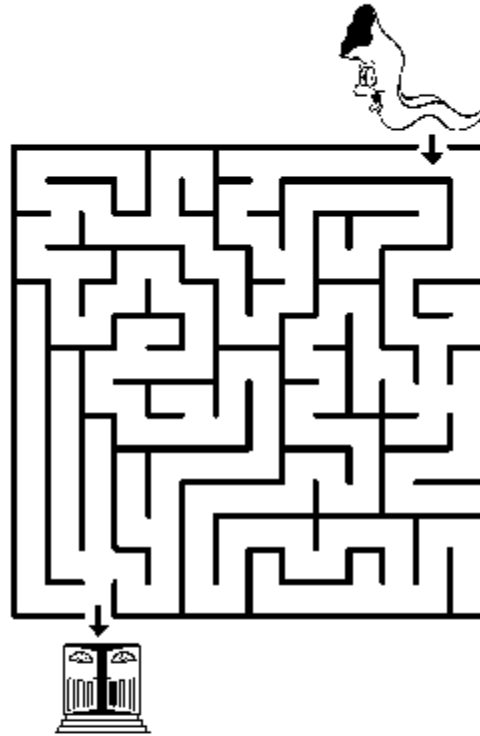
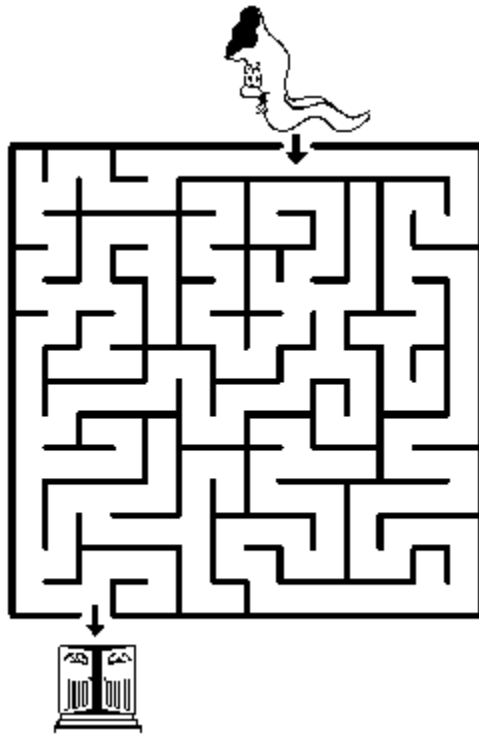
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MAZES!

FOR YOUNGER KIDS

Help
Shrilly the Shofar
find his way
home!



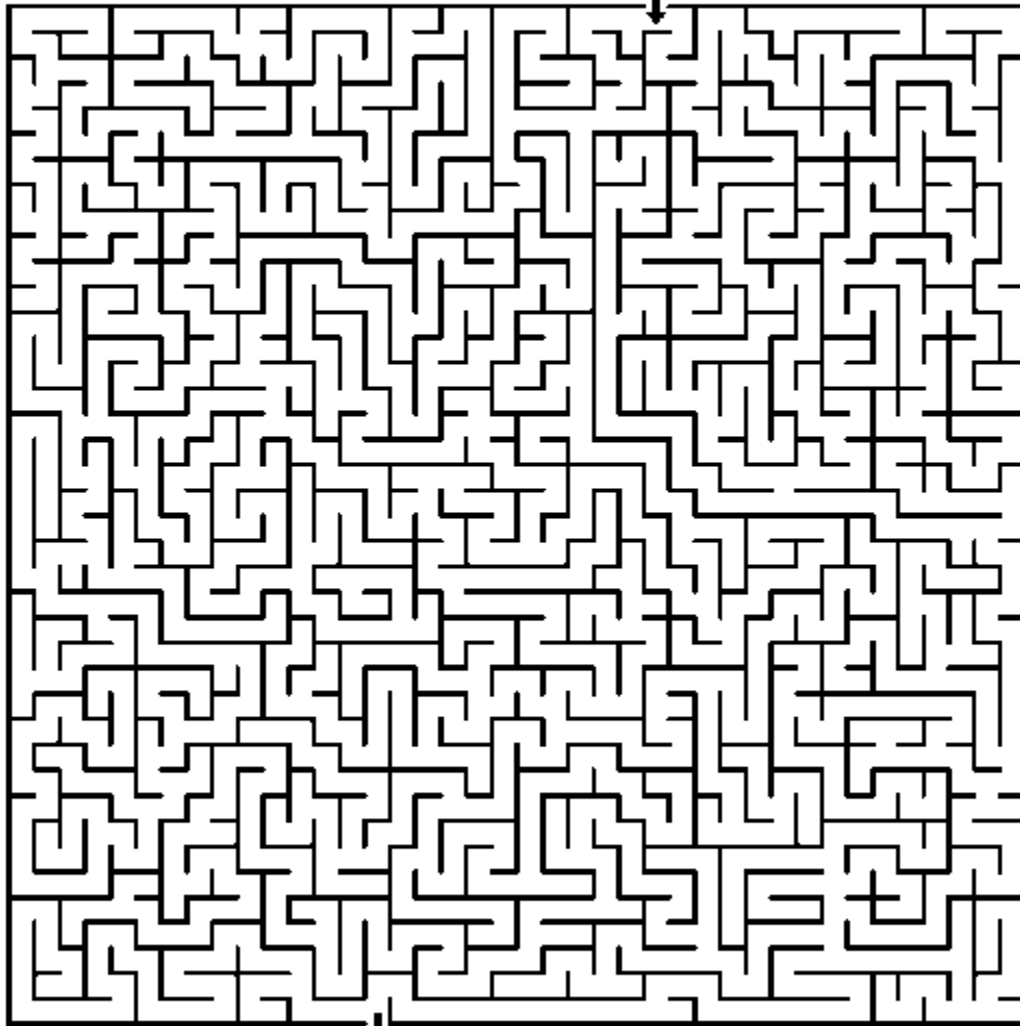
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MAZES!

FOR OLDER KIDS

Dip the Apple in the Honey!



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Coloring Pages



A MINI-POSTER TO COLOR



A
ROSH
HASHANAH
GREETING
FOR YOU TO COLOR & SEND!



