

# THE KTM DAF PARASHA

## BRINGING A TASTE OF ISRAEL TO MONTREAL



### DESTINY CALLS

BY RAV ARI FAUST (ROSH KOLLEL)

There are seasons when history feels as if it is pressing on our shoulders, demanding an answer. Will we rise

to the moment? Will we carry forward what so many before us risked everything to preserve? In recent months, Jews around the world have felt that call with unusual intensity — an awakening that reminds us that our story is bigger than any single generation, and that the responsibility of Jewish continuity rests, once again, in our hands.

The Torah makes a radical statement (Devarim 29:13–14):

וְלֹא אִתְּכֶם לְבַדְכֶם אֲנִי בֹרֵךְ אֶת הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וְאֶת הָאֵלֶּה הַזֹּאת. כִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁנֶנּוּ פֹה עִמָּנוּ עֹמֵד הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר אֵינֶנּוּ פֹה עִמָּנוּ הַיּוֹם.

**Not only with you am I making this covenant and this oath, but with those standing here with us today before the Lord, our God, and also with those who are not here with us, this day.**

On the eve of the Jewish nation's entry into Israel, Hashem entered into a covenant with them. What is remarkable, however, is that this moment - some 3,300 years ago - is considered binding on all Jews in all generations. How can this be? How can a covenant with our forefathers obligate us today?

Abarbanel raises this very challenge:

**Who gave the capacity to the generation of the wilderness – those who stood at the foot of Mount Sinai – to obligate those who come after them in the oath they took?! So much so, that their offspring would be held accountable for all the commandments of the Torah, its oath, and its punishments...**

If I make an agreement with a friend that their grandchildren must pay me \$50 a month, is such a contract enforceable? Is such an agreement even ethical? In what sense does the covenant encompass “those who are not here” - reaching all the way to us today?

Rabbi Sacks (Ten Paths to God) offers an illuminating perspective:

**Jews are born into a faith. It chooses us before we choose it. Physically we come naked into the world, but spiritually we come with a gift: the story of our past, of our parents and theirs through almost forty centuries from the day Abraham and Sarah first heard the call of God and began their journey to a land, a promise, a destiny... That story is ours... They were charged with building a society unlike any other, based ... on justice and compassion, the dignity of the individual and the sanctity of human life – a society that would honour the world as God's work and the human person as God's image.**

**That was and is a demanding task, yet Judaism remains a realistic religion. It assumed from the outset that**

**transforming the world would take many generations – hence the importance of handing on our ideals to the next generation.**

From the very beginning, our mission was intended to be multi-generational. Ours is a story that could never be completed in a single lifetime. Those who were first imbued with this destiny required their descendants to carry it forward, to realize and fulfill it. The covenant depended on “those who are not here.” The charge of our ancestors reverberates to us today. And just as they relied on us to pick up their torch, we now rely on future generations to carry it after us.

The question is: will we pick up the torch - and will we have one to pass on? It is a question that beckons us on the eve of Rosh Hashana - and perhaps even more urgently now, in this post-October 7 reality.

Sociologists have noted “the surge” in Jewish engagement that has emerged in the wake of October 7. Many Jews who once felt distant have found themselves pulled closer, drawn to embrace their identity with new seriousness. The term “October 8th Jews” refers to Jews who, in the shadow of the assault on our people, are encountering their Judaism as never before - and they are seeking authentic connection.

In a recent article for Commentary magazine, Dan Senor offers a lucid analysis of this phenomenon. He observes that we have been confronted with a twofold disappointment in Western society. First, how can it be that Jews have contributed so much, and yet face such a vehement rise in antisemitism? Second, how can Israel's cause, so clearly just, meet with such widespread and passionate condemnation? What more could possibly be asked of us?

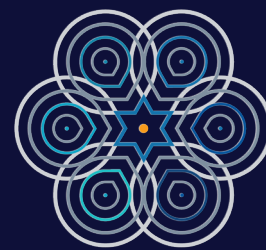
Senor writes:

**If we can agree that Israel isn't going to win the information war, and we can't make the anti-Semites less anti-Semitic, and that simply investing in non-Jewish causes will never be enough to grant us a get-out-of-the-pogrom-free card, then what are we to do?**

**I think the answer is shockingly simple: We must lead Jewish lives. For this is what has sustained Jewish life, and Jewish existence, in every century.**

The answer to our disappointment is not to end antisemitism - because we cannot. The answer is to live meaningful Jewish lives. The solution is not to hide, but to be proud. Not to retreat, but to embrace our destiny.

What this looks like will vary from person to person. For some, it may mean beginning to light Shabbat candles or making kiddush on Friday night. For others, it may be volunteering with Holocaust survivors, or taking on regular Torah study.



TORAH תורה  
מציון MITZION

KTM MONTREAL

**PARASHA NITZAVIM  
27 ELUL, 5785**

**SEPTEMBER 20, 2025**

**CANDLE LIGHTING: 6:39 P.M.**

**HAVDALAH: 7:40 P.M.**

**ROSH HASHANA  
1 TISHREI, 5786  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2025**

**CANDLE LIGHTING: 6:33 P.M.**

**2 TISHREI, 5786**

**CANDLE LIGHTING: after 7:34 P.M.**

**HAVDALAH: 7:32 P.M.**

THE DAF PARASHA IS DEDICATED BY IONIT & MONTY STECKLER AND FAMILY IN HONOUR OF THE SECOND YAHRZEIT OF LONG-TIME HEBREW ACADEMY TEACHER OF TORAH, RABBI BARUCH ABRAMOWITZ, Z"l.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR A DAF PARASHA, PLEASE CONTACT RAVARI@KTM.MTL.ORG.

**THE DAF PARSHA, AND ALL LEARNING AT KTM DURING THIS TIME, IS DEDICATED TO THE SPEEDY RESOLUTION OF THE SITUATION IN ISRAEL, THE RETURN OF THE CAPTIVES, THE HEALING OF THE INJURED, & THE PROTECTION OF OUR BRAVE HEROES. MAY HASHEM LEAD THEM TO VICTORY, AND THEN HOME.**

Whatever the form, one thing is certain: a more engaged Jewish life leaves us stronger, more fulfilled, and more deeply rooted in our Jewish identity - precisely what we need in turbulent times.

It may be a frightening and confusing moment to be a Jew and a Zionist. But it is also a profoundly beautiful and historic one. This Rosh Hashana, may we resolve to pick up the torch of our ancestral heritage, so that we may pass on the torch of our eternal destiny. For ourselves, and for “those who are not here with us, this day”.

*Shana Tova U'Metuka!*



## TESHUVA - NOT A BLANK PAGE

BY EVYATAR KERNER

We are all used to thinking of Rosh Hashanah as the “beginning of the year,”

a blank page, a zero point from which we set out on a new path.

But when we look carefully at the Torah and the Hebrew calendar, something surprising is revealed (Vayikra 23:24):

בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ יְהִי לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן  
זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ

**In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a holy occasion, a memorial proclaimed with the blast of the Shofar, a holy convocation**

Rosh Hashanah, the time that represents a period of new beginnings, does not fall in the first month of the Hebrew calendar but in the seventh one— Tishrei.

So why is Rosh Hashanah, which awakens new beginnings, marked specifically in the seventh month? It would be more fitting for

it to be marked in Nissan, the first month in the Torah, about which it is said (Shemot 12:2): “This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it is the first for you of the months of the year”.

The Torah wants to teach us here an important lesson about the nature of beginnings. Not all beginnings must come from absolute emptiness, from a blank page. They can also be born right in the middle of the journey. We don’t need to wait for the “perfect moment” – until I finish my studies, or when I get married, once I’ve made money. Instead, change begins here and now in the middle of life, with everything I have already done and accomplished, and also with what I have failed at.

There is no need to erase everything that came before. We don’t need to start everything over as if everything that passed was a mistake. Quite the opposite – Rosh Hashanah reminds us that all our history, everything we have been through, even the falls, are part of the foundations that enable us to grow.

In this sense, Rosh Hashanah in Tishrei is a powerful symbol that calls us not to wait for ideal conditions in order to change. Don’t postpone change until tomorrow, but start from here and now, specifically from within everything we have experienced, all the complexities and stories that remain with us. We open a new page, not in a place of erasure but in a place of continuation and building. Everything we have been through – both moments of light and dark places – becomes the foundations upon which we build the continuation of our path.

Rosh Hashanah is not only a time of new beginnings, but a time of processing the past and turning it into a springboard for a better future that will be the foundation for the growth of the new year through renewal, and real progress.

On a personal note, this New Year comes at an especially meaningful time for me - having just begun my shlichut here in Montreal. I look forward to an impactful year, and can’t wait to meet everyone!



## BECOMING WHO WE’VE ALWAYS BEEN

BY CHAGAI SHREM

In these days of the month of Elul, we are preparing ourselves for the Day of Judgment, the day

when we stand before the Creator and He essentially decrees our fate for the coming year. We prepare ourselves through saying Selichot (prayers for forgiveness) and taking a personal account of what we did well this year and where we need to improve.

So, I want to talk a bit about Teshuvah. Usually, we tend to think of Teshuvah in a negative light. I’ve sinned, and now I’m returning to repentance. This perspective comes from the idea that a person thinks they only need to do Teshuvah after committing a sin. As a result, we don’t really feel good about doing Teshuvah because it points to our flaws and the less desirable parts of our personalities. Teshuvah, in our subconscious, is connected to our failures.

Rav Kook addresses this perspective and says that, yes, Teshuvah involves correcting our sins, but it’s much broader than that. The word “חטא” (sin) in Hebrew means to miss the mark, which implies that a sin is essentially losing the straight and healthy path. The whole world operates according

to laws that the Creator embedded within it. The world is also called “בריאה” (creation), which also means “health.” This implies that the world is straight and well-ordered, as long as it hasn’t been spoiled.

It’s mentioned in the Talmud (Kohelet Rabbah 7:19) that when Hashem created Adam, He took him around all the trees in the Garden of Eden and said, “Look at My works, how beautiful and perfect they are, and everything I created, I created for you. Pay attention not to ruin and destroy My world.” This means that the world is good, and man doesn’t need to create something new that didn’t exist; he only needs to preserve the good that already exists.

This principle also applies to the individual. Teshuvah is not about creating something new; it’s about returning to our natural, corrected state. A person is good by nature, and they don’t need to get beyond themselves to be good - they already are. They just need to open up to all the good that exists within them. In fact, the sin is the abnormal state. From this, we learn a few important things: Returning to our true self is easier because everything is already inside us; we just need to uncover the good and not create something new,

which is much harder. A person just needs to remove the obstacles that prevent the good from flowing and trust in the goodness that is already inside them.

Because Teshuvah is about returning to our true selves, a person will not feel at peace unless their character traits are so flawed that they no longer feel something is wrong - just like a sick person who has become so used to being ill that they forget what it feels like to be healthy and no longer seek a doctor. But if a person listens to themselves, they will fix the things that need fixing, and then they will return to feeling healthy. It’s the same with our emotional and spiritual lives - Teshuvah is a positive thing that drives us to correct our actions.

In conclusion, a person is inherently good, and they need to allow this goodness to emerge. When we do Teshuvah, we’re essentially returning to ourselves. That’s why it’s easier, and by the end of the process, it makes us feel better.

Thank you for welcoming me to the community - I look forward to meeting and growing with you all this year!



## HALACHIC Q&A

BY RABBI YOSEF ZVI RIMON - NASI, WORLD MIZRACHI

**Question: What are the *simanim*?**

Answer: On the first night of Rosh Hashana, it is customary to eat specific foods as a sign for a good new year. The earliest source for this practice is Nechemya,<sup>1</sup> who tells the people to eat rich and sweet foods on Rosh Hashana.<sup>2</sup> In gemara Horiyot (12b), Abaye relates to the significance to *simanim*, and as a result, establishes it as a good practice for the beginning of each year. This practice is codified in Shulchan Aruch.<sup>3</sup>

**Question: What species are the *simanim*?**

Answer: The Gemara mentions gourd, leek, beet, dates, and fenugreek or black-eyed peas. What is unique about these foods? Rashi explains that some of them grow quickly (a symbol for development), and some are sweet. From the words of the Ge'onim,<sup>4</sup> it appears that one may choose *simanim* based on the connection of the name of the food to the specific request we have. Many have the custom of eating apples in honey,<sup>5</sup> fish,<sup>6</sup> and the head of a sheep/ram head.<sup>7</sup> You may add more *simanim* with "yehi ratzon" of your own language.

**Question: Should we eat *simanim* on the second night?**

Answer: *Simanim* are mostly associated with the first night.<sup>8</sup> Many eat the pomegranate only on the second night in order to bless "shehechyanu", and many eat the apple and honey on the second night as well. Some have the minhag to eat all of the *simanim* on the second night.<sup>9</sup>

**Question: At what point of the meal should the *simanim* be eaten?**

Answer: There are two minhagim: 1) After "hamotzi" – the practice of most Ashkenazim and some Sephardim, and 2) after *kiddush* – the practice of some Sephardim<sup>10</sup> and few Ashkenazim. If eating the *simanim* after "hamotzi": Make a *bracha rishona* on the *simanim* which would not normally be part of a *seuda* (such as a date), and afterward eat the foods which would normally be in a meal (like a carrot). You do not need a *bracha acharona*. If eating the *simanim* after *kiddush* (before *seuda*): A *bracha* needs to be made (first on fruit and then vegetables). The *poskim* debated whether a *bracha acharona* is necessary, and generally, we do not need this (when making the *bracha rishona*, it is proper to have in mind to cover foods you eat during the *seuda* as well).

**Question: What should be eaten first?**

Answer: There are two customs: 1) The date is eaten first because it is one of the seven species. This is found mostly amongst Sephardim.<sup>11</sup> 2) The apple is eaten first. Many Ashkenazim follow this practice<sup>12</sup> along with some Sephardim. This custom stems from the kabbalistic notion that a person favors eating an apple (or apple in honey).

**Question: Should I say Hashem's name when making the "yehi ratzon"?**

Answer: You can say Hashem's name, as this is not a *bracha* but rather a prayer. This is the common practice.

**Question: When do we say the "yehi ratzon"?**

Answer: There are a few different customs. It is preferable to say the *bracha*, eat a bit, and then say the "yehi ratzon."

**Question: What is the meaning of the *simanim*?**

Answer: The language of the Meiri implies that the *simanim* awaken us to act properly; they are a source of inspiration for us to improve our ways and progress. The *simanim*, however, have no intrinsic effect. The Maharil, Chaye Adam, and some explain based on Ramban, that a symbolic act on our part creates a reality. When one sees things in positive light, he changes his reality to a better one. As the year begins, we focus on a positive outlook, including our families and currently reality along with the new reality which will come to light this year. We aim to create positive natural associations with the different parts of our lives. At the outset of the year, we are training ourselves and our families to focus on the positive and to look for the good in our reality. While this is always proper, it is especially relevant this year. This past year brought us very difficult challenges, and specifically for this reason, we hope to add on so much more goodness as the new year begin, to see good, and to daven for abundance from Hashem.

Compiled by Yaakov Panitch.

1. Nechemya 8:9-10)
2. Mordechai Yomah 723
3. OC 583.
4. Otzar HaGeonim Rosh Hashana 32b
5. Machzor Vitri 323
6. Abudarham
7. Shulchan Aruch
8. Eschel Avraham M'Buczacz, 584
9. Sha'arei Teshuva 583:1
10. Rav Ovadya/Rav Mordechai Eliyahu
11. Ben Ish Chai, some ashkenazim as well
12. Implied from Tur OC 583, Maharil 8

## PARNASS HAYOM: TISHREI

- 1 TISHREI | Jack Dym, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Mike Dym z"l
- 2 TISHREI | Lionel and Karen Dubrofsky, in honour of the Yahrzeit of Fayga bat Myriasha z"l
- 3 TISHREI | Alex Guttman in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Esther bat Tsvi Menachem HaCohen z"l
- 4 TISHREI | Gabi Cohen, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Tova bat Meir z"l
- 6 TISHREI | Joel King, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his father, Arthur King z"l
- 7 TISHREI | Cindy Faust, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her mother, Harriet Miller z"l
- 8 TISHREI | Jeffrey Rein, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Olga Rein z"l
- 8 TISHREI | Jewel Shoham and Family, in honour of the Yahrzeit of her husband, Rabbi Sidney Shoham z"l
- 26 TISHREI | Rabbi Reuben Poupko, in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother, Hinda Poupko z"l





# THE TRIBE SCRIBE

ROSH HASHANAH: RINGING BELLS!



I'M SO EXCITED IT'S **ROSH HASHANAH**! I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR THE **SHOFAR** - IT'S MY FAVOURITE PART OF **ROSH HASHANAH**.

YOU KNOW DINA, **ROSH HASHANAH** IS NOT JUST ABOUT LISTENING TO THE **SHOFAR**. HEARING THE **SHOFAR** IS MEANT TO MAKE US DO SOMETHING! THE **DUBNO MAGGID**, A GREAT RABBI AND MASTER STORYTELLER TELLS THE FOLLOWING STORY TO HELP US UNDERSTAND THE MESSAGE OF THE **SHOFAR**.



Once upon a time, a poor man was visiting his rich uncle who invited him to stay. The man was fascinated by the beautiful artwork, thick carpets and ornate furniture in his uncle's home. The table was laid with sparkling crystal and as for the flowers...

During the meal...

TING-A-LING!

LET'S HAVE SOME WINE.

TING-A-LING!

UNCLE, MAY I HAVE A LOOK AT YOUR BELL?

HMM, LOOKS LIKE AN ORDINARY BELL TO ME.

COME AND SEE WHAT I HAVE BOUGHT! IT'S A MAGIC BELL!

TING-A-LING-A-LING!

BELLS 'R' US

YOU SILLY MAN! THE BELL DOESN'T MAKE ANYTHING HAPPEN.

YOU SOLD ME A FAULTY BELL! I RANG IT AND RANG IT BUT NOTHING HAPPENED! GIVE ME MY MONEY BACK!

IT SENDS A SIGNAL TO THE SERVANTS TO BRING WHAT THEY HAVE PREPARED. IF YOU DON'T HAVE SERVANTS WAITING THEN THE BELL ISN'T GOING TO MAKE THEM APPEAR.

THE **SHOFAR** IS LIKE THE BELL IN THE STORY. THE SOUND OF **SHOFAR** ITSELF DOESN'T DO ANYTHING, BUT IT REMINDS US TO DO **TESHUVA** AND SAY SORRY FOR ANYTHING WE HAVE DONE WRONG. JUST LISTENING TO THE **SHOFAR** IS NOT ENOUGH, WE NEED TO ACT ON ITS MESSAGE AND PUT THINGS RIGHT.



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Tribe is the Young People's Department of the United Synagogue: Creating a future for our community through engaging, educating and inspiring the next generation.

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