

Hi! I'm Morah Shevy, and I'm so excited to share my thoughts and ideas about the yamim tovim and the weekly parshah with you. I hope that the content and concepts will help you engage, encourage, and, most importantly, connect with your children, giving them the opportunity to share what they're learning in school together with you.



## סליחות

Starting from *Motzaei Shabbos* before Rosh Hashanah, we daven a special *tefillah* called Selichos. We ask Hashem to forgive us for all our *aveiros*.

## ראש השנה

Rosh Hashanah is the first day of the year. On this day, Hashem sits and judges every person. He writes down what will happen to us this year. It's a serious Yom Tov filled with davening and teshuvah, but it's also a happy

day. This is because we know Hashem is our Father and loves us, and we hope He will give us a sweet new year!

## The First Night

When the men come home from shul, we wish each other a shanah tova. Then we sit down to a beautiful Yom Tov meal. Instead of the regular challah we eat all year, we eat a round challah. What does the round shape remind you of? The challah is shaped like a crown because on Rosh Hashanah we crown Hashem as our King. At this meal, we



## Yom Tov Explained

also eat the simanim – the special Rosh Hashanah foods. Some of the simanim we eat are:

1. We dip an apple in honey so we should have a sweet new year.
2. We eat from the head of a fish because we want to be a head in all our mitzvot, and not like the tail. Some families eat the head of a sheep instead of a fish.
3. We eat a rimon, pomegranate, because it has many seeds. We want to have as many zechusim as the pomegranate's seeds.
4. We eat gezer, carrots. In Yiddish, carrots are called mehren, which means more. We want more and more zechusim on this day.

### Rosh Hashanah Day

On Rosh Hashanah the men spend a lot of time davening in shul. We go to shul with our mothers to hear the shofar. The shofar is like an alarm, or like a lion that roars and tells us, "Wake up! It's time to do teshuvah!"

The shofar makes three sounds: tekiah, shevarim, teruah.

(This year, we will only hear the shofar on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. The first day of Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbos, and the shofar is muktzah on Shabbos.)

We try to use a shofar that comes from an ayil, a ram, because we want to remind Hashem about Akeidas Yitzchak. Akeidas Yitzchak was a special test that Hashem gave to Avraham Avinu. Hashem told Avraham to bring his only son Yitzchak as a korban. When Hashem told Avraham that it was just a test, he still wanted to do the mitzvah because he loved Hashem so much. Instead, Hashem showed him a ram that was stuck in the bushes by its horn. Avraham brought the ram as a korban. When we blow the shofar with a ram's horn, we ask Hashem to remember how much Avraham and Yitzchak loved to do His mitzvot. In their merit, He should give us a good year.

### תשליך

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah, right after Minchah, we go to a body of water, such as a lake or pond, and say Tashlich. We daven to Hashem and say that we are throwing all our aveiros into the water. If we don't live near a lake or pond, we can say Tashlich after Rosh Hashanah. 



## A Mashal: Let's Daven Now

There was once a father who lived far away from his only son. He loved his son very much and thought about him all the time. One day, he decided to travel far across the ocean to visit him. He sent his dear son a message: "My precious child, I'm coming to be with you and spend time with you. When I'm with you, you'll be able to ask me for anything you want."

The father made the long, hard trip to visit his son. He passed through many countries and traveled for many weeks. With each mile he covered, he became more and more excited. Finally, he reached the port of his son's city and looked around for his son.

Where is he? the father wondered. Why isn't he waiting for me?

He was very disappointed when he realized his son wasn't there.

My son must be preparing a beautiful welcome for me at the gate of his city, he thought.

He traveled to the city gates, but still didn't see his son.

## WASN'T HE EXCITED TO SEE HIS FATHER AFTER SUCH A LONG SEPARATION?

"Where could my precious son possibly be?!" he said. "Maybe he's waiting to greet me with a parade at the entrance to his block."

He traveled still further, but when he reached his son's block, it was dark and quiet. He searched for his son's house, hoping there would at least be a welcome party for him. But when he got to the door, he noticed that the lights in the house were off.

Now he was really confused. Wasn't his only child awaiting his arrival? Wasn't he excited to see his father after such a long separation?

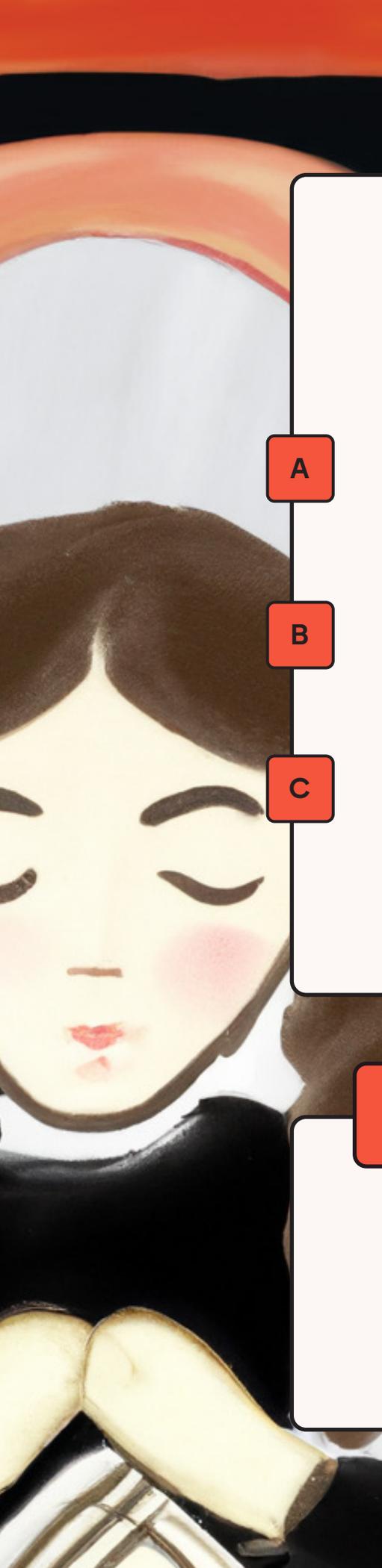
He knocked on the door, thinking that maybe the lights were off because his son had planned a surprise party. No one answered. He knocked again and again. Finally, the window on the second floor opened and his son peeked out. "Who's there?" he called.

"My precious only son, it is I, your father!" his father said. "I came to spend time with you and give you anything you need."

"I'm sorry, Father," said his son. "I already went to bed for the night. Can you go stay in the hotel across the street and come back tomorrow?"

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This story is a mashal. The father is Hashem, our loving King, who comes close to us, His children, during the month of Elul and through Yom Kippur. He gives us a chance to daven, do teshuvah, and ask for whatever we need. The sound of the shofar reminds us that Hashem is close to us now. We don't want to be like the foolish son who ignores his father. Let's daven and do as many mitzvot as we can. Hashem will surely give us a gut gebentched yahr! 🇲



## What Is Teshuvah?

A

**When we do teshuvah**, we think and feel bad about the mitzvos that are hard for us to do, or that we don't always do so well.

**For example:** It's hard for Malky to stop playing and come to the supper table right away when Mommy calls her. Malky feels bad about this and tells Mommy, "I'm sorry."

B

**When we do teshuvah**, we feel bad and decide that we will try to do this mitzvah better.

**For example:** Malky decides that from now on, she will stop playing and run to Mommy as soon as she is called.

C

**We know that we did teshuvah** well if the next time we do this mitzvah we do it better.

**For example:** The next time Malky hears Mommy announcing that supper is ready, she jumps up and joins the supper table with a smile.

Hurray for Malky!

### Check for Understanding

1. Why do we blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah?
2. What are some of the special foods we eat on Rosh Hashanah, and why?
3. What is Tashlich?

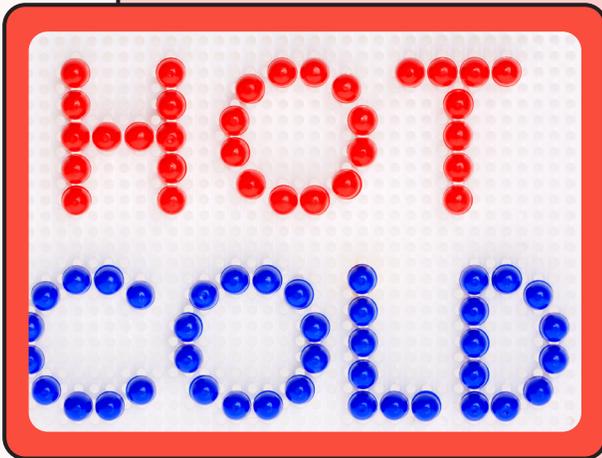
# FUN ACTIVITIES

Here are some quick, easy activities you can do with your family to further enhance and solidify the lessons they've learned and heard about. Enjoy!



## Guess toooo too

Serve noodles for dinner one night. Mix the following types of noodles together: Spaghetti (for the long tekiah sound) Ziti or penne (for the shorter shevarim sound), Macaroni (for the short teruah sound) Ask your children if they can figure out why you cooked all these types of noodles together.



## Shofarture

Play a game of "hot and cold," where an item is hidden and the child who is "It" needs to find the item. Have your children make the sounds of the shofar as hints: tekiah is "cold," shevarim is "warm," and teruah is "very hot."

## A kesivah Tovah

Make a raffle or let each family member choose one person for whom to make a "shanah tovah" card. On Erev Rosh Hashanah, they can present this card to them (if they can wait!). Alternatively, encourage each child to send a card to a loved one who doesn't live locally.

