

Rosh HaShanah: Time Reborn

Rabbi Edward L. Nydle (Levi bar Ido)

B'nai Avraham

Unfortunately there are many within the “Messianic/Nazarene Movement” who lack proper and a mature understanding concerning the Festival of *Rosh HaShanah*. They bring contention and strife over the date and name of this Scriptural Holy Day. We need a proper understanding of the importance and purpose of this day not only for Yisrael, but for all mankind. In order to understand we must raise the level of our spiritual awareness. Those who can gain a higher level not only see things as they seem, but also see the concealed causes and motivating factors that cannot be revealed by the senses or logic.

Scripturally, Yisrael has two calendars. According to tradition there are four calendars¹ for Yisrael. *Abib* or *Nisan* is the New Year for Kings and Festivals (religious) and *Tishri* or *Ethanim*² is the New Year for Sabbatical Years and the year of *Yovel* and planting (civil). The New Year of *Abib* is the calendar used in *Vayigra 23*. At one time Avraham and the Hebrews only had one calendar, the civil calendar beginning in *Tishri*. This continued until YHWH commanded the Passover to be slain in *Mitzrayim*. By the first century C.E. there were several calendars being used.

Both calendars are used in Scripture and continue to the present day. Only the religious calendar is used to compute dates following its institution in *Shemot 12*. For example; when we read in *Bereshith 8:4* about the ark resting on the 17th day of the seventh month, it is understood to be the month of *Abib*, which is the seventh month on the civil calendar. In *2 Chronicles 29*, the 17th day of the first month should be understood as the month of *Abib*, the first month of the religious calendar. The earth has a physical birthday (*Tishri* 1) and Yisrael has a spiritual birthday (*Abib* 1).

¹ Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 1:1

² 1 Kings 8:2

The purpose for the Torah's time schedule is to give mankind some insight into cosmic activity during certain years, months, days or seasons. The Torah provides us with a key to the cosmic code and the energy present during these days of power. In order to maintain the world in balanced manner, there is one group that posses the knowledge to maintain the structure and order of the universe- and this is the people of Yisrael.

A by- product of creation was the establishment of time. According to tradition, Adam was created on *Tishri* 1, which was the sixth day of creation. However, some sources say *Tishri* 1 marks the creation of the world³.

- **Lev 23:24** *Speak unto the children of Yisrael, saying: In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest unto you, a memorial proclaimed with the blast of horns, a holy convocation.*

Rosh Hashanah is a revelation of the Divine Will (*Keter*) and thus is called the "Head of the Year". As every person has a head and the brain (*Mochin*) is located in the head, so the year has a head which dictates the actions in the coming year. The brain gives life force to the body; similarly on *Rosh Hashanah* the life force extends to all the days of the coming year. According to tradition the heavenly Court judges all mankind on *Rosh Hashanah* and inscribes us in the Book of Life. The sign for the month of Tishri is the sign of the Divine scales, which in Aramaic are called *moznaim*. It is the month of trial and judgment. *Rosh Hashanah* is a bittersweet meeting with your future. It is an annual encounter with life and death based on your relationship with time.

Rosh HaShanah is more than a remembrance of creation. It is a day on which the world is created anew. The day is neither an event, nor a commemoration, nor a point in the time cycle. It is an absolute beginning of time, the onset of time as a series of strictly defined entities, rather than a continuous line extending into infinity. Each entity has a life of its own because time is like a living organism that can live and die. The year is organically born on *Rosh Hashanah* and thus reborn on this day.

³ Prayer for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur says, "Today is the birthday of the world".

On *Rosh Hashanah* the world returns to its point of origin and the pendulum is reset. On *Rosh Hashanah* we are living at appoint before the beginning. It is a time before time.

Time is a pulsation similar to heart beats. Each beat is a singular phenomenon and every second life surges forth once again (*ratso-vashov/* outpouring and contraction). The world has a heart that keeps beating that allows it to live. It is similar to our heart; it keeps beating although we are not aware of it. Thus the renewal of time is the emergence of a new heart beat and life is reborn. The Hebrew word “*pa’am*” means “beat or once” and also designates a point in time. So time is like a metronome. We are constantly between two beats of time. The day will come when no beat will follow the one before. At *Rosh Hashanah*, one year follows another which implies disappearance and death of the previous. *Rosh HaShanah* marks an instant when a year has disappeared and a new year must be born to enable us to live. The Hebrew word “*shanah/year*” comes from the root that means “doubling, change, or repetition”. What happens is a repetition of the act of creation and a renewal of time.

Every birth begins in the heads, the brains, of the offsprings parents. The fertilization process initiates in brains or will of the father and mother. The child is the outcome of the genetic memory of the parents and their desire. In like manner, on *Rosh Hashanah* a new year is conceived.

Time is like a plant. The year develops the seed that is born on *Rosh Hashanah* and that will grow over the next year. We could say that the program for the year is conceptualized and stored in memory on *Rosh Hashanah* and that the other 364 days are spent running the program. Time is also like a body, in that it obeys the will of the brain. This is why *Rosh Hashanah* is called the “Head”- the brain, program, principle- of the year.⁴ A person’s vessel for receiving energy for the next year is based upon his activity during the year that has just ended.

- **Rev 20:12 -13** *And I saw the dead, the small and the great, stand before Elohim. And books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead in it. And death and hell delivered up the dead in them. And each one of them was judged according to their works.*

⁴ Likutei Torah, Deut.55c

Time is not given to us all at once. It comes in increments. The decision to renew creation (time) is made once a year on *Rosh HaShanah*. All mankind, no matter what they believe, is dependent upon that point in time. It is the beginning of the world and the beginning of the Divine Reign (Kingdom/*Malkut*)⁵. It is a closed circle where the beginning and the end meet and merge. It is in *Malkut* that the world was made to become the Kingdom of Elohim. The Beginning and Kingship are identical as expressed by the sages: The end action is in the beginning in thought.⁶

Whatever separates *Keter* from *Malkut* are tools to accomplish the Divine Will. They are the means to attain this goal. Thus, the world of intention or Will, and the world of action, *Malkut*, are one and the same. There is no duality between Elohim the Creator and Elohim the King.

This is why *Rosh Hashanah* is a time when YHWH is proclaimed King since *Rosh Hashanah* is YHWH's coronation. He is chosen to be king. We choose Him every year. The Chosen people chose Him as King. YHWH chose us, and without this choice we could not be Yisrael. But on the other hand, YHWH is only King if men freely choose to recognize Him as such because there is no King without subjects. YHWH chose Yisrael so Yisrael would choose Him.⁷

Rosh Hashanah is the time when this choice- or a renewal of this dual choice-takes place. It is not about religion. It is a day in which we may discard from our lives all the disruptions and negative actions of the past, yielding a change for the better in the New Year's script for your life.

Shanah Tovah

⁵ From the Daily Prayer Book

⁶ Lekhah Dodi, Shabbat poem

⁷ Deut.26:17-18