

# TISHREI HOLIDAYS

5772

● Rosh Hashanah ● Yom Kippur ● Sukkot ● Simchat Torah ●

A Jewish day begins and ends at sunset, rather than at midnight. Therefore, Jewish holidays begin the evening before the date specified below.

## **Rosh HaShanah** (September 29-30, 2011 1-2 Tishrei 5772)

*In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts (Leviticus 23:24)*

*Rosh HaShanah* is the Jewish New Year that falls on the first day of the Hebrew month of *Tishrei*. It is observed by attending synagogue services where the *shofar* is heard and eating a festive meal with traditional foods such as fish, a round *challah* and apples and honey. Throughout the Torah, the *shofar* is mentioned as a special element in many ritual observances, not only at *Rosh HaShanah*. For example, each new moon was announced with the blowing of the *shofar*. *Rosh HaShanah* begins the “Ten Days of Awe”. During this time it is customary to examine our relationships with ourselves, with others and with God. *Rosh HaShanah* is celebrated for two days in Israel and in Orthodox, Conservative, and some Reform congregation. Other Reform congregations celebrate for one day.

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## **Yom Kippur** (October 8, 2011 10 Tishrei 5772)

*Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring an offering by fire to the LORD. (Leviticus 23:27)*

*Yom Kippur*, the Jewish Day of Atonement, marks the end of the “Ten Days of Awe”. It is considered to be the holiest day of the Jewish year. Observances include fasting and five synagogue services. *Kol Nidre* (all vows) is chanted at the *Yom Kippur* evening service. *Yom Kippur* focuses on personal change, confession of wrongdoings, and asking G-d for forgiveness. During the afternoon service the Book of Jonah is read. This *haftarah* is read because the book has as its theme the subject of repentance. While inside the great fish

Jonah says a prayer admitting his wrongs and G-d forgives him and the fish releases him on dry land. Later, when Jonah is in Nineveh the people heed his warning. They fast, pray and change their way of life. The last service ends with the blowing of the *shofar*. Dairy foods are traditionally served in the home at the evening "Break-the-Fast" meal when services conclude.

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### **Sukkot** (October 13, 2011 15 Tishrei 5772)

*On the fifteenth day of this seventh month there shall be the Feast of Booths to the LORD, (to last) seven days. (Leviticus 23:34)*

*Sukkot*, the "Festival of Booths", is a seven day holiday that falls five days after Yom Kippur. It celebrates the fall harvest and commemorates the days when the Hebrew people lived in the wilderness after their exodus from Egypt. Its customs include living in a temporary hut, a "sukkah", for seven days, shaking the "four species", and rejoicing during the holiday. The "four species" are the palm, myrtle and willow branch which are bound together (*lulav*) and the lemon-like fruit, citron (*etrog*). A ceremony is performed each day in the *sukkah* and the *lulav* and *etrog* are shaken in six directions to symbolize the belief that G-d is everywhere. Another important custom of *Sukkot* is hospitality. It is important to share your meals in your *sukkah* with guests.

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### **Simchat Torah** October 20, 2011 23 Tishrei 5772)

*Simchat Torah* means "Rejoicing of the Law". This holiday celebrates the end of the annual Torah reading cycle, and the beginning of that cycle anew. During the synagogue service the last *parsha* (portion) of the Torah is read which relates to the death of Moses, and then the beginning *parsha* of the Torah is read which tells the story of the creation of the world. All the Torahs are taken out of the ark and paraded around the synagogue seven times. Singing, dancing, and carrying flags accompany these parades.

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