



Welcome to Spark, the Tribe Parasha activity sheet that will help you bring Judaism to life in a varied and exciting way. I'd like these activities to enthuse the children and show them how the Torah given almost 3500 years ago is still as relevant and as exciting in our lives today.

Thank you for offering to run a Children's Service, for all the hard work you put into it and for making a real difference to so many young people. The US is very proud of the numerous Children's Services that are run every week across the UK and this would not happen without you.

Spark gives you an overview of the weekly Parasha, songs, an activity, discussion questions or D'var Torah linked to the Parasha or important event that week. Every Children's Service will be different, in terms of how many participants there are, their age range, its length and the varying abilities of the children. Please read through the document and find the activities that will best suit the needs of your group. It is advisable to read it before Shabbat in case there is some preparation that may be needed in advance.

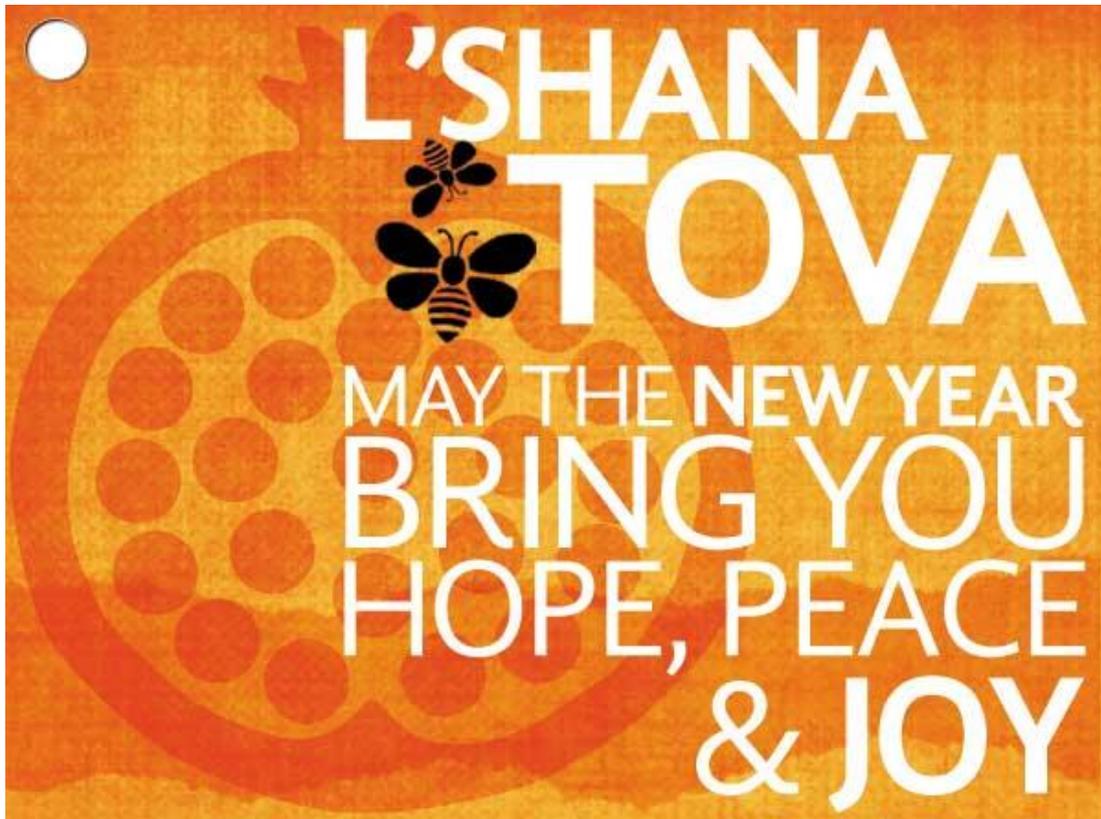
I am sure the children at your shul will benefit from Spark. Please be in touch if you have any queries, feedback or if we can be of any help. Thank you again for the work you do in enabling so many young Jews to access their heritage and traditions in such an exciting way.

All it takes is a small spark of interest, to ignite a flame of passion for Judaism.

With kindest regards,
Rabbi Nicky (Goldmeier)
Spark Editor and Education Consultant

Rosh
Hashana
5780

Rosh Hashana Summary:



Rosh Hashana means 'Head of the Year' in Hebrew. It is the beginning of a period of ten days when Jewish people across the world think very carefully about their behaviour and actions during the past year and look forward to a blessed year ahead.

We remember all the good things we have done and also the things we should not have done and ask and pray to be forgiven for these things and promise to try and be better next year. Rosh Hashana is a serious day and many adults spend a lot of the time praying. There are many unusual and beautiful prayers said on Rosh Hashanah, some of which will be explained below.

Rosh Hashana falls on the 1st and 2nd days of Tishrei, which is the seventh Hebrew month (30th September and 1st October this year). Rosh Hashanah is

also the birthday of the world and we remember the six days of creation and specifically the creation of Adam and Eve on the sixth day of creation.

There are many signs, symbols and customs associated with Rosh Hashana. These include apple dipped in honey, eating pomegranates and other unusual fruit, covering the Aron (Ark), Bimah (central platform in the Synagogue) and Sifrei Torah (Torah scrolls) with white. In shul (Synagogue), the people leading the services wear a white tunic known as a *Kittel* and we traditionally have round Challot (instead of the Plaited Challot). Some people also have the head of a fish on their dinner table on Rosh Hashana. Perhaps most symbolic of all, the Shofar (Ram's horn) is blown on Rosh HaShana. When we hear the Ram's horn it reminds us to do *teshuvah* (to be sorry for wrong things we have done in the past year and make an effort not to do them in the future).

The Torah reading on the days of Rosh Hashanah are about the birth of Yitzchak (Isaac) and how God promised Sarah and Abraham that they would have a child in their old age. We also read the famous episode of the 'Binding of Isaac' (Akeidat Yitzchak) and the Haftarah (special reading from the book of Nevi'im (Prophets) is about Chanah (Hannah) and how she prayed to God for a son.



- Rosh Hashana is just one of the names of the Jewish new year and is most commonly used, as it actually means 'Head of the Year'.
- Rosh Hashana lasts for 2 days, even in Israel (where festivals are usually observed for one day less).
- Other names for Rosh Hashana include;

Yom Terua – The Day of Blowing (The Shofar)

Yom Hazikaron – The day of remembering (when we think back over the past year, at what we have done well and not so well)

Yom Hadin – The Day of Judgment (When God judges the whole world)

Yom Harat Olam – The Birthday of the World (we celebrate the creation of the world on Rosh Hashana)

- The festival of Rosh Hashana is the start of a ten day period, ending with Yom Kippur and during this time we reflect on our actions and achievements over the past year. We look to the year ahead and think about ways in which we can improve ourselves and the world around us.
- One of the main themes which runs through the prayers on Rosh Hashana is 'Teshuva, Tefilla and Tzedaka' (Repentance, Prayer and Charity).
- We pray from a 'Machzor' instead of a 'Siddur' on Rosh Hashana.
- On Rosh Hashana we greet people with 'Shana Tova Umetukah' – 'May you have a good and sweet new year'.
- One of the many popular Rosh Hashana traditions is to have apple and Challah dipped in honey. This is a clear sign of our hopes and aspirations for the year ahead. Honey obviously signifies the sweetness we all want in our lives. According to our Rabbis of old, the Garden of Eden (Gan Eden) which is described during the episode of creation and to which Adam and Eve first went when they were created, has the scent of an apple orchard. Furthermore, when King Solomon depicts the love God has for the Jewish people, he writes 'Beneath the apple tree I aroused your love' (Song of Songs 8:5).
- Eating pomegranates is another widespread tradition for Rosh Hashana. The prophets of the Bible would make a physical sign to concretise their prophecy, demonstrating that the transition from potential to actual is dependent on our physical actions. Therefore, by eating a pomegranate we express our wish for a year filled with as many merits as a pomegranate has seeds.
- The coverings in the Shul (Synagogue) are usually blue, maroon or other such colours, but from Rosh Hashana until the end of Succot, we drape the Torah scrolls, the Ark at the front of the shul (Synagogue) and the Bimah (central platform from which the service is led) in white. Once again, white is a symbol of purity to which we should all strive during this time of year. This is also why the Chazzan (Cantor), Rabbi and other service leaders wear white on Rosh Hashanah and

Yom Kippur.

- Eating round Challot is yet another Rosh Hashana custom and the circular shape of these Challot signify our wish for a year in which blessings and goodness continue without end.
- Having the head of a fish on the table on the first evening of Rosh Hashana is a widespread custom. The head represents the head of the year and a fish does not have eyelids, so seems to never sleep. Similarly, God never sleeps and is always watching over us and the rest of the world.
- We blow the Shofar (Ram's horn) on both days of Rosh Hashana this year (during years on which Rosh Hashana falls on a Shabbat, the Shofar is not blown on that day). The Shofar is a Ram's horn which reminds us of the faith and trust Avraham (Abraham) had in God, to the extent that he was prepared to offer his son Yitzchak (Isaac) as an offering to God. As Avraham (Abraham) was about to offer Yitzchak (Isaac) on the alter, an angel of God stopped him and told him to offer the Ram caught in the bush by its horn instead. We therefore use a Ram's horn to show our faith and trust in God, that He will judge us favourably and give us a good and blessed year ahead.
- The Ba'al Tokea (The Shofar blower) blows 100 notes on each day of Rosh Hashana and he is guided by the Ba'al Makre (the caller of the notes). As the Ba'al Makre calls a note, so the Ba'al Tokea blows it.
- Before we blow the Shofar, we say 2 Brachot (Blessings)

**בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
לְשִׁמּוֹעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר**

**Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu lishmoa kol shofar**

**Blessed are You, Ruler of the World, who has made us holy with
commandments, and who has commanded us to hear the voice of the
shofar.**

**בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוֹ
הַזֶּה**

**Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam shehecheyanu
v'kiyimanu v'higiyanu lazman ha-zeh**

Blessed are You, Ruler of the World, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season

- As we hear the Shofar being blown, it reminds us to think about how we can make ourselves even better than we were in the previous year (See 'The Voice of the Shofar' story below)
- There are 3 main notes blown, namely; Tekia (a long note), Shevarim (3 shorter notes) and Terua (9 very short notes). The Tekia Gedolah (The 'big' Tekia) is blown at the end and this is a **very** long note).
- We say the famous Tefilla (Prayer) 'Avinu Malkeinu' ('Our Father, Our King'). In this prayer, we refer to God as both a Father and a King to appreciate that there are times when God responds to us like a king in strict justice and there are times when God responds like a father would towards his children, with mercy and love.
- The Torah readings are about the birth of Yitzchak (Isaac) to Abraham and Sarah and the Haftarah reading (from the Book of Prophets) is about the birth of Samuel to Chana (Hannah) and Elkana.
- Both Sarah and Hannah could not have children for many years but God eventually blessed them both with a son. Both Yitzchak (Isaac) and Shmuel (Samuel) devoted their lives to God (Isaac through the Akeida and Samuel as a prophet).
- These episodes teach us an additional message for Rosh Hashana; that both these women had tremendous faith and trust in God and through their devout prayers, their request was answered. Similarly, we should use the time in Shul (the Synagogue) to pray to God with devotion, for a good, healthy and blessed year ahead.
- In the afternoon on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, we go to a stream, river or any other water source and perform the custom of Tashlich.
- 'Tashlich' comes from the Hebrew word meaning "to cast," referring to the intent to cast away our sins via this meaningful and ancient Jewish custom.
- Special verses are recited next to a body of water, preferably one that has fish (though when no such body of water was available, some rabbis were known to do *Tashlich* next to a well,

even one that dried up, or next to a bucket of water). Prayers and Psalms are said and at the conclusion of the Tashlich ceremony, some people empty their pockets as if they are filled with all the wrong things they have done in the past year and they are now washing away.

Children's Service: Tot's – Year 3 - Activity

Activity 1

The children should be sitting in a circle and you will need an apple which you will pass around the circle. As each child receives the apple, they should say, 'On Rosh Hashana, when I dip my apple or challa in honey, I'm going to ask for...' the child then says what they would like, to make the coming year AMAZING (They may say things like, 'a new bike, new friends, a new pet etc)



Activity 2

'True or False' – This is a great game to play with all ages of children and will test their knowledge about Rosh Hashana.

You will need 2 plastic/paper cups and a number of tokens made from blue and red card (I recommend you prepare at least 30 tokens of each colour).

Place 2 chairs at one end of the room. Place a plastic/paper cup and a pile of 2 coloured pieces of card on each chair (I would recommend red and blue card). Get the children in to 2 teams and ask them to form a line parallel to each other's team (as if they were about to start a relay race).

As you call out a fact, each child should walk to the chair and if they think what you have said is true, they should place the blue card in the cup and go back to their team. If they think that what you have said is false they should put the red card in the cup. They should go back to their team and if the child is correct, they can keep their piece of card. If they are not correct they should take it back to the chair. It is not a race, but it will be helpful if you had another adult who can keep the scores.

1. Today is Rosh Hashana (True)
2. We shake the Lulav and Etrog on Rosh Hashana (False)
3. We blow a trumpet on Rosh Hashana (False)
4. We dip apple in honey on Rosh Hashana (True)
5. We light the Chanukiyah on Rosh Hashana (False)
6. We hang a gold curtain in front of the Ark on Rosh Hashana (False)
7. We read from the Torah on Rosh Hashana (True)
8. We eat round Challot on Rosh Hashana (True)
9. We have a Seder on Rosh Hashana (False)
10. We say a Bracha (Blessing) before we hear the Shofar (True)
11. We perform the ceremony of Tashlich standing near a football pitch (False)
12. There is a special custom to have the head of a fish on our dinner tables on Rosh Hashana (True)
13. There is a special custom to eat avocados on Rosh Hashana (False)
14. Another name for Rosh Hashana is 'Yom Hazikaron' 'The day of Remembrance'. (True)
15. Rosh Hashana lasts for 1 day in Israel. (False)

Activity 3

Place a number of artefacts in to a bag, which are used on Rosh Hashana (an apple, small jar of honey, pomegranate, shofar, Machzor, Tallit, a jar of water labelled 'Tashlich', a piece of card with 'Sarah and Abraham' on it and a piece of card with 'Hannah' written on it). You may want to include additional Rosh Hashana artefacts.



Divide the children into groups of 3 and you should go to one group at a time and ask that group to pull out from the bag an artefact relating to Rosh Hashana. They should use the artefact they pull out to prepare an act about how it is used. For example, if they pull out the apple they could pretend to be sitting at a table and dipping it in to honey or if they pull out the Machzor (prayer book for festivals), they can act out a scene where they are in shul (the Synagogue) praying. You could even increase the number of children in each group depending on how many children there are in total.

Give the children 5 minutes to prepare their scene and the children can watch each other's groups.

You could do this over the 2 days of Rosh Hashana depending on how many children you have in your service.

Story – ‘The Little Red Rabbi’ (based on the well-known story of ‘The Little Red Hen’ ...but with a difference!!).



It was the week before Rosh Hashana (The new year) and the Little Red Rabbi was invited to speak at a shul (Synagogue) on the Shabbat only 2 days before Rosh Hashana, in a neighbourhood which was about 2 hours drive away. The Little Red Rabbi didn't like going away for Shabbat by himself, so he called his good friend Michael. 'Hi Michael, would you like to come to Sunny Town with me for Shabbat. I've been asked to speak there as their guest?' 'Of course' said Michael, 'that would be a pleasure.' He then called his friend Michaela. 'Would you and your husband like to come with me to Sunny Town for

Shabbat. I've been asked to speak there as their guest?' 'Of course' said Michaela, 'that would be a pleasure'. The Little Red Rabbi then called his friend Morris. 'Hi Morris, would you and your wife like to come to Sunny Town with me for Shabbat. I've been asked to speak there as their guest?' 'Of course' said Morris, 'that would be a pleasure'.

So the Little Red Rabbi, Michael, Michaela and Morris and their families all went to Sunny Town for Shabbat, only one day before Rosh Hashana!

They all had such a lovely Shabbat in Sunny Town. The weather was glorious, the food was so tasty and the people in Sunny Town were so very kind and helpful.

The next day was Sunday and the Little Red Rabbi, Michael, Michaela, Morris and all their families set off in their cars, back home. But do you know what happened? They got STUCK IN A TRAFFIC JAM!!

The Little Red Rabbi, Michael, Michaela and Morris didn't know what to do. They were going to be so late for Rosh Hashana. How would they have time to buy and prepare everything. The apple and honey, the pomegranates, the fish, the chicken soup, the ice cream for dessert, picking up the kittel and tallit from the Dry Cleaners, collecting the Shofar from the Jewish book shop!

Suddenly, the Little Red Rabbi had an idea. He asked his wife to use his mobile phone to call Michael, Morris and Michaela. Michael's wife was driving, so he could talk and Morris was driving, so Morris' wife could talk. Michaela was driving, so Michaela's wife could talk. 'Tell the others that as we are going to arrive home so close to the start of Rosh Hashana, we will all prepare something and then we will meet at our house on Rosh Hashana and spend the festival together. They all agreed that this was a super idea.

When they arrived home, there were 3 hours left before the beginning of Rosh Hashana. Michael and his family bought the pomegranates and the honey, Michaela and her family went to pick up the Dry Cleaning and the ice cream and Morris and his family picked up the Shofar and the apples.

Everything was prepared.

That evening, after shul (Synagogue), the Little Red Rabbi, Michael, Michaela, Morris and all their families sat around a HUGE Rosh Hashana dining table.

As the Little Red Rabbi passed the pieces of apple to everyone and they dipped it in honey, everyone had the same thing on their mind. THIS YEAR WAS GOING TO BE THE SWEETEST YEAR EVER. SHANA TOVA EVERYONE!!

Children's Service: Years 3- 6

Activity 1 – Saying Sorry!

This is a game which will highlight the concept of 'Forgiveness' which is so important on Rosh Hashana. Explain to the children that we take the opportunity during this time of year, to forgive people for anything they may have done wrong to us. Similarly, God is quick to forgive us when he sees that



we are quick to forgive others.

You will need a small sponge ball or a beach ball for this game which is based on the popular game 'Hot Potato'.

Have everyone stand in a circle. Holding the beach ball, tell the children about a time when you forgave someone for something. Toss the ball to another child and say, "Hot potato!" Now it's that person's turn to share with everyone how they forgave someone.

Let them pass the ball, sharing their stories until everyone who wants a turn has had a turn at telling everyone about a time they forgave someone.

Activity 2 – Firing Compliments



This activity is based on a popular game called 'Bang Bang' but instead of saying 'Bang Bang' the children have to give each other a compliment such as 'you look smart' or 'you're kind' or 'you share'. It is quite challenging, so before you start the game explain that you have changed the rules and the children will need to 'fire' a compliment at each

other. This will highlight the importance of resolving on Rosh Hashana, to always speak kindly to people as they go through the new year.

Get everyone to stand in a circle facing inwards. The leader running the game will need to stand in the middle of the circle. The leader points at someone in

the circle. That person must duck down straight away and the two people either side of them must turn to face each other, hold their hands in the shape of a gun and shout a compliment. All this needs to happen as quickly as possible.

Whoever ends up getting complemented first is out. So, if the person who gets pointed at originally doesn't duck down quick enough, then they are out. If they do duck down quickly, then whoever says the compliment first out of the two people either side of them stays in and the other person is out.

When there are only two people left, they stand back to back, and the person who was in the middle starts counting. With each count the two people take steps away from each other, western style. The person who was in the middle then yells 'compliment', and the two people turn and say a compliment. The person who is fastest wins and gets to be in the middle the next round.

This is a super fun youth group game that needs no extra materials. Kids might want to play a few rounds so they can get a second chance if they get out really quickly.

For the leader running the game, after a few turns they might want to make their pointing a bit trickier by looking away or spinning in a circle. Be creative!



Rosh Hashana Quiz (answers are in brackets at the end of each question)

1. Apart from 'Rosh Hashana, what are 2 other names for this festival (Yom Terua - Day of the Shofar, Yom Hazikaron – Day of remembering, Yom Hadin – Day of Judgment, Yom Harat Olam – The Birthday of the World)
2. What are the names of the 3 main notes of the Shofar? (Tekia, Shevarim, Terua)
3. From which animal is the Shofar? (Ram)
4. Which special event in the Torah, involving Abraham and Isaac, does this remind us of? (Akeidat Yitzchak – The Binding of Isaac)
5. What are the names of the 2 famous women we read about on Rosh Hashana (Chana-Hannah and Sarah)
6. Which special custom of Rosh Hashana shows that we want to have a sweet new year? (Apple/Challa dipped in honey.)
7. How many days are there between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, including these 2 festivals? (10 days)

- 8.** What are we pretending to throw away when we perform the ceremony of Tashlich by a source of water? (Our wrong doings, the things we should not have done)
- 9.** Why do we have a custom to eat 'round' challa on Rosh Hashana? (We want the year ahead to be filled with an endless cycle of goodness and blessing)
- 10.** Why do we change the covers in the Shul (Synagogue) to white at this time of year? (white is a symbol of purity)

Discussion Points



Begin by reading this story and the discussion points will follow...

Story – There was once a young man who lived in a small village a long way from any other village. One day the young man decided that he would like to leave home and explore the big, wide world out there.

So after making some plans, he set off with a ruck sack on his back. He walked and walked and eventually he came to a small town. He walked through the town, looking at the beautiful wooden houses with thatched rooves, the people and the different types of shops.

Suddenly he noticed that one of the houses had caught fire and being made of wood, the young man was worried that very soon the fire would spread. Just as he was thinking that this might be disastrous, a young boy got up on a high platform in the town square and started blowing a bugle. Immediately, all the townsfolk stopped what they were doing, ran to the water wells, the bathtubs, the troughs of water and came running with buckets of water which, in no time at all, extinguished the fire before it could do any serious damage.

The young man was absolutely amazed at how the sound of the bugle had so quickly summoned everyone and how the fire had been put out so quickly.

He hastily gathered his belongings and ran back to his own little village! People were surprised to see him back in the village so soon after leaving. 'Don't worry' said the young man, 'I'm going to show you something really clever'. People watched in horror as he walked up to one of the houses, struck a match and set fire to it. 'What are you doing' people shouted, 'have you gone mad' others said.

'Don't you worry one little bit – just watch this.' And he took out a bugle he had purchased on his way home and began to blow it with all his might. People just stared at home as he blew the bugle. Nothing happened and in no time the whole village was burned.

This fictional story is called a 'Mashal – Parable' and serves to teach us a lesson. The lesson it teaches us is about the job of the Shofar and our role in listening and acting on what we here.

Discussion points

- **What did the bugle tell the people in the town the young man visited?**
- **Why did the sound of the bugle get all the people running for water in this town?**
- **Why did it not have the same effect in his own village?**
- **What does this parable teach us about the sound of the Shofar?**
- **Do you know what the Shofar is telling you when you hear it on Rosh Hashana?**

Songs – The links have been included for you to watch before Rosh Hashana and if you so wish, to teach the children these songs



Song – 'Avinu Malkeinu'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6aA6_5higY

This link has the words in Hebrew and transliterated in English.

אָבִינוּ מַלְכֵנוּ חֲנֻנוּ וְעֲנֵנוּ כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ מַעֲשִׂים עֲשֵׂה
עִמָּנוּ צְדָקָה וְחֶסֶד וְהוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ

*Avinu Malkeynu choneynu va'aneynu ki eyn banu
ma'asim asey imanu tz'dakah vachessed v'hoshieynu.*

Our Father, our King, grant us justice and bring us
salvation,
Grant us justice and loving kindness and bring us
salvation

Dip the Apple in the Honey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByYzmsmQ3wI>

Dip the apple in the honey
Make a Bracha loud and clear
L'Shanah Tova umetukah
May we have a sweet new year

[Shana Tova – The video includes the lyrics](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_i1jq10-1o

Shana halcha, shana baa
Ani kapai arima
Shana tova lecha, aba
Shana tova lach, ima
Shana tova, shana tova!

Shana tova ledod gibor
Asher al hamishmeret
Ulechol noter, bair, bakfar
Birkat "chazak" nimsheret
Shana tova, shana tova!

Shana tova, tayas amitz
Rochev bimrom shamaim
Verov shalom malach ivri
Ose darko bamaim
Shana tova, shana tova!

Shana tova lechol amel
Banir vegam bamelet
Shana tova umetuka
Lechol yalda vayeled!

Shana tova, shana tova!

Fountainheads Rosh Hashana Song

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=fountainheads+rosh+hashanah+song&view=detail&mid=AE252C2908F34AC1C0CAAE252C2908F34AC1C0CA&FORM=VIRE>

Tekia, shevarim, terua x2 (*sounds of the shofar*)

A new year rising

A new beginning

Lift your head up, turn yourself 'round, the world is spinning

Feel the magic of a new day

Open your heart to a fresh start, send your fears away

You've made mistakes- you feel it

You've got what it takes – believe it

Any wrong can be made right

Just forgive you need not fight

Shana tova u Metuka – its Rosh Hashana (*Good and sweet year*)

Shana tova, u'metuka

Dip your apple in the honey, on Rosh Hashana

It's Rosh Hashana

So many new hopes

Waiting to find you

Open your eyes

The dreams you prize are all around you

The smiles are hiding

No use in guessing

Make up your mind, go out and find

That simple blessing

This is your time – you feel it

How sweet it is – believe it

Any wrong can be made right

Just forgive you need not fight

Shana Tova u Metuka – its Rosh Hashana

Aneinu – shana tova

Shana tova, u'metuka

Dip your apple in the honey on Rosh Hashana

Shana tova, u'metuka

Hear the sounds of jubilation – its Rosh hashana

Yehi Ratzon shenihyeh – rosh- lo zanav (*May it be Your Will that we will be like the head and not the tail*)

Filling life for those around us with joy and love

Avinu malkeinu chaneinu veanaeinu (*Our Father, Our King, Have mercy on us and answer us*)

Hear our prayer Oh Lord

Inscribe us in the book of life

Chaneinu vaeinenu, shana tova

Shana tova, u'metuka

Dip your apple in the honey – on Rosh Hashana

Hear the sounds of jubilation – its Rosh hashana

Give us life Lord

And sustain us

Oh deliver us

To salvation

It is New Year

On Rosh Hashana

Make your loved ones smile

It's Rosh Hashana

Open your hearts to one another its Rosh hashana

It's Rosh Hashana