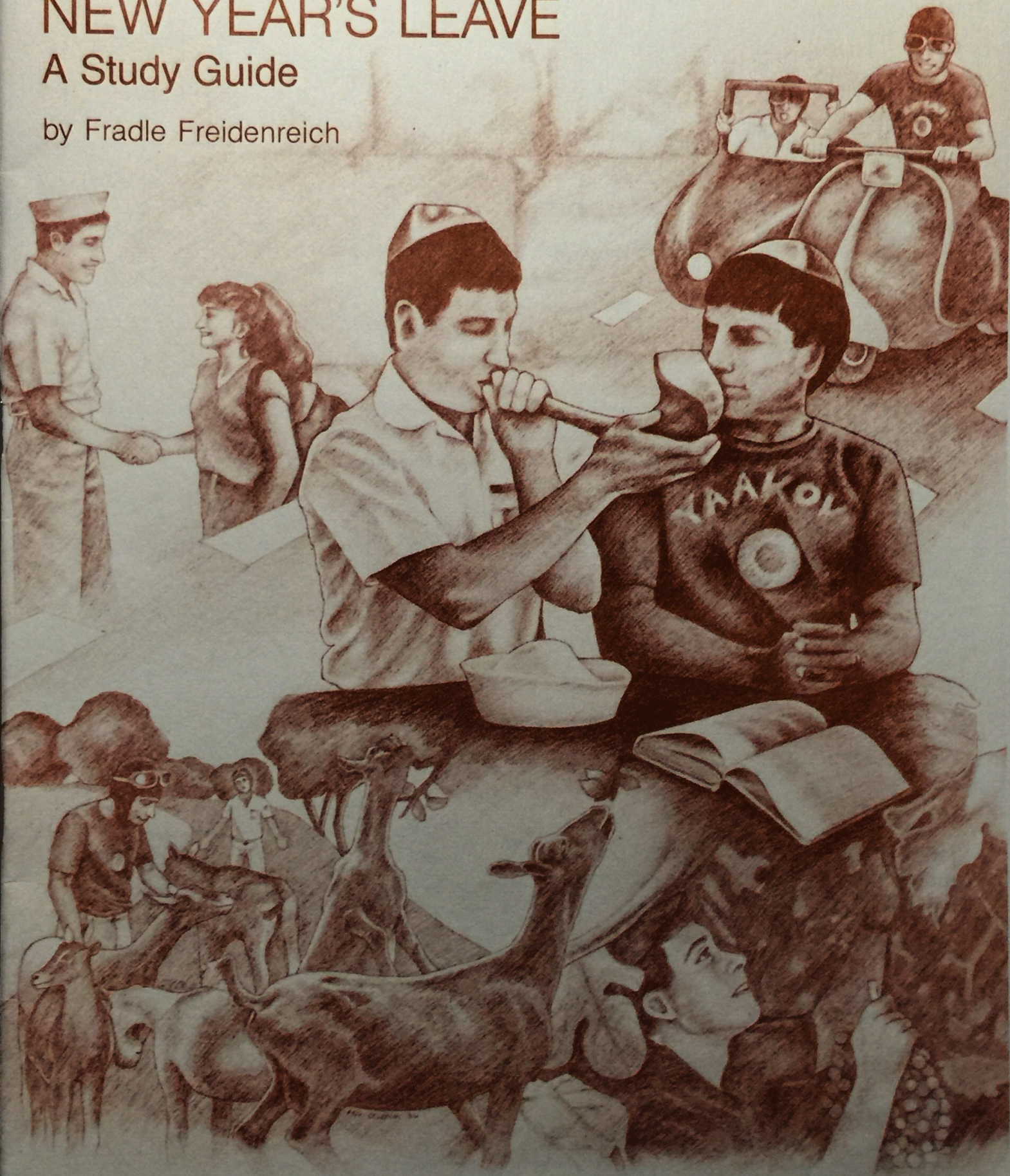


NEW YEAR'S LEAVE

A Study Guide

by Fradle Freidenreich



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I. Notes on the Material

This guide is intended for those who wish to enrich the viewing/learning experience as a family, or as a group in both formal or non-formal settings.

The videotape centers on the holiday of Rosh Hashanah, dealing with aspects of history, symbols and other Jewish concepts and sites in Israel. It is an entertaining and informative program for children (over 6) and adults.

The group leader/teacher is urged to preview the videocassette and review the accompanying material carefully. As this guide is not intended as a comprehensive sourcebook, refer to the background readings and reference books listed in Section VIII.

The video can be used in its entirety or in segments as a springboard for discussions about a variety of topics, including:

- Rosh Hashanah as a holiday
- Rosh Hashanah symbols
- Rosh Hashanah rituals
- The historical significance of Rosh Hashanah
- Early biblical history
- Sections of the High Holiday Prayerbook and the Bible
- Kibbutz life

Because of the above wide range of categories and the diversity they represent, this video can be shown well before, just prior to, during, or even after the holiday. It can:

- provide background information
- teach facts and symbols
- serve as a review
- present possibilities for individual projects, etc.

Don't be afraid to try a variety of uses, e.g., leaving it continually playing in the lobby of your building, or making it available for home viewing.

Give careful consideration to the age-appropriateness of each activity. Take into account attention span, developmental characteristics and vocabulary level.

Note:

There are a number of scenes and issues (e.g., the kibbutz), which, although presented as part of the story, are not central to Rosh Hashanah and the specific goals of teaching the holiday. A number of discussion questions and activities may include such references because they are referred to in the presentation, but the teacher/leader is advised that these should be dealt with in a supplemental manner rather than as an integral part of dealing with the holiday.

A Note on Transliteration

The following system is used throughout

VOWELS AND CONSONANTS FOR SPECIAL NOTICE

- a as in 'papa' (short) or 'father' (long)
- e as in 'get' or 'the'
- eh as in 'get' (used only at the end of a word)
- i as in 'bit' (short) or 'machine' (long)
- o as in 'often'
- u as in 'pull' (short) or 'rule' (long)
- ai as in 'aisle'
- oi as in 'boil'
- ei as in 'veil'
- g as in 'get' (hard 'g')
- kh as in Scottish 'loch' or German 'ach'
(representing the Hebrew letter *khaf*)
- h as in Scottish 'loch' or German 'ach'
(representing the Hebrew letter *het*)

II. Synopsis

Larry, a U.S. sailor whose ship is docked in Haifa for repairs, is given a short leave. He decides to take a tour and registers for the "Rosh Hashanah Special" with a delightfully unusual tour guide, Yaacov. On a motorcycle with side car, Yaacov takes Larry to Kibbutz Gezer, the Old City of Jerusalem, aboard an Israeli naval ship and through the streets of Haifa. Larry learns about the meaning of Rosh Hashanah, some of its symbols and customs, and just how "special" this Rosh Hashanah tour can be. Specific segments include the binding of Isaac (Genesis Project) as well as a lively musical accompaniment by Selah (formerly the Diaspora Yeshivah Band).

III. Key Words and Phrases

The following names, places and phrases, holiday expressions, symbols and concepts are introduced in the videotape. Explanations are based on material from various publications as listed in the section "Additional Resources."

Places		Persons
Gezer	Bahai Temple	Abraham
Moriah	Jerusalem	Isaac
Haifa	Western Wall	

ROSH HASHANAH VOCABULARY FROM THE VIDEO

Akeidah (עקדה) —the binding of Isaac, (Genesis 22).

Apples & Honey —traditionally eaten on Rosh Hashanah for a sweet year.

Aseret Y'mai Tshuvah (עשרת ימי תשובה) —the ten days of Repentance (between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur).

Goot Yontef, Goot Yohr (Yiddish—גוט יום־טוב, גוט יאָר) —good holiday, good year. A traditional greeting for all Jewish holidays. The word yontef is derived from the Hebrew *Yom Tov*.

Heshbon Hanefesh (חשבון הנפש) —literally "accounting of the soul." During the High Holidays one is to take stock of oneself and review one's actions during the previous year.

Kiddush (קידוש) —the special prayers that are recited over wine to begin holidays and Shabbat.

L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivu (לשנה טובה תכתבו) —"May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for a good year." Traditional Rosh Hashanah greeting.

Rosh Hashanah (ראש השנה) —literally, "head of the year", referring to the Jewish New Year holiday.

Shanah Tovah (שנה טובה) —A good year, traditional Rosh Hashanah greetings.

Shofar (שופר) —A ram's horn which is blown on Rosh Hashanah in accordance with Jewish law. "The sounding of the shofar is the focus of the holy day. A ram's horn is traditionally employed because it recalls the story of Abraham and Isaac: Abraham's trust in God, and God's mercy.

"The long, high notes of the shofar suggest the sounds of alarm that in biblical days gathered the people of Israel together for concerted action. In this case the alarm is meant to rouse the congregants from their moral lethargy and urge them toward improvement (Maimonides, *Yad Teshuvah* 3:4). The short, quick notes blown on the shofar, by their resemblance to the cries of a bereaved mother, arouse feelings of remorse and encourage reflection on the meaning of life. The calls of the shofar are also intended to remind us of the power and glory of God, the revelation at Sinai, the destruction of the Jerusalem Temples, and the stirring words in which the prophets described the eventual redemption that sincere repentance can bring.

"Though the notes of the shofar remind us of our moral failings during the past year, they also assure us of the opportunity that exists to change for the better in the coming months. The mood is meant to be reflective, not mournful!"*

Slihot (סליחות) —literally, forgiveness. Refers to special penitential prayers recited before Rosh Hashanah and between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Tashlich (תשל"ך) —"You will cast." On the afternoon of the first day of Rosh Hashanah traditional Jews walk to a river or spring and recite Tashlich prayers, expressing the hope that God will cast off our sins, in keeping with Micah 7:19.

Tishrei (תשרי) —The 7th month of the Jewish year in which Rosh Hashanah falls.

Yom T'ruah (יום תרועה) —"Day of Sounding the Shofar." (Lev. 23:32).

*Reprinted with permission of *Homesart*, Behrman House.

IV. Concepts & Ideas

A. The following concepts and ideas are referred to in the videotape:

1. "Bringing in" the New Year
2. Beginnings, beginning again
3. A clean slate
4. A sweet New Year
5. New Year's Resolutions
6. The Binding of Isaac (Genesis 22)—The Torah reading for the second day of Rosh Hashanah. Read because of the reference to the ram's horn at the end of the reading (reference is included in the Zikronot prayers); the devotion of the Jewish people as exemplified by Abraham's ultimate faith when asked to sacrifice his beloved son.
7. *T'shuvah*—repentance
8. New Year's greetings: sending cards, shaking hands, kissing, saying "*Shanah Tovah*" etc.
9. The blowing of the Shofar.
10. The days of Slihot —the concept of forgiveness.
11. Mt. Moriah—where Isaac was bound, where the Temple was built, where the Western Wall stands today.
12. The significance of the Western Wall.
13. Jerusalem—"A city with a soul" and with "layers of history"
14. The Land of Milk and Honey—honey—for sweetness. Apples and/or hallah dipped in honey at Rosh Hashanah.

B. Other concepts referred to:

1. The variety of Jewish—holiday practices, traditional foods, ritual melodies for prayer (*nusakh*).
2. The port of Haifa and the Israeli Navy.
3. The varieties of non-Jewish religious expressions in Israel each with its various important holy places. (Moslem, Christian, Bahai, etc.).
4. "To Build and Be Built"—a phrase included in the Zionist song *Anu Banu Artza*. This raises the ideas expressed by David Leishman about kibbutz life and social justice, democracy, equality and the intrinsic Jewish nature of the land.
5. The symbolism of blue and white (flag, worker's shirt, etc.).

V. Thoughts and Questions for Discussion

The following questions and thoughts can be used in many different ways, dependent on setting (e.g., classroom or multi-aged family) and age group. Some are not particularly appropriate as phrased for younger children, yet the thoughts could be put into simpler language and still be used successfully.

1. The period of self-scrutiny, "taking stock" and repentance begins with the first day of Elul, one month before Rosh Hashanah. At the end of each morning's service, the Shofar is blown and Psalm 27 is recited. Why does this begin so far in advance of the holiday? What is the significance of Psalm 27? (See Arzt, p. 36).
2. Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of the day the world was created, and the day on which the world is judged each year.
3. Why is the shofar blown on Rosh Hashanah?
4. Why do some Jews write personal prayers on paper and place them in the cracks of the Western Wall?
5. Why do we eat sweet things and use a round hallah on Rosh Hashanah?
6. What foods are also eaten traditionally on Rosh Hashanah that many Ashkenazi American Jews are not familiar with? (Pomegranates and leeks).
7. How can one "take stock" of oneself and how one lives?
8. Why are most Jewish prayers written and expressed in the plural?
9. Rosh Hashanah is a holiday for reviewing relations both between humanity and God and between individuals.
10. Why might an American-born person immigrate to Israel?
11. How did the holiday Rosh Hashanah get its name?
12. Why do we celebrate the Jewish New Year in the 7th month of the Jewish calendar? Historically, there were four "new years"—Rosh Hashanah, the first day of Tishrei (the 7th month) was the agricultural New Year. (The other three are: the first of Nissan—new year of the Kings; the first of Elul—the new year for tithing cattle; the 15th of Shvat, Tu B'Shvat, the new year of the trees.)
13. What are some other names for Rosh Hashanah? (Yom Teruah, Yom Hazikaron)

VI. Songs

Simha L'Artzekhah

Simha l'artzekhah
V'sasson l'eerekhah
U'tzmihat keren l'David avdekha
V'arikhat neir l'vein yishay m'shihekahah
Bimheyra b'yameinu
U'vkhen tzadikim yir'u v'yismahu
V'yisharim yaalozu
Vahasidim b'rina yagilu

And let us lift our voice
 For Israel a choice
 Let singing voices go out to the world
 From Jerusalem
 And let us know what's true
 We need to know from you
 Over and over, sing it once again, from Jerusalem

שמחה לארצך

שמחה לארצך
 וששון לעירך
 וצמיחת קרן לדוד עבדך
 ועריכת נר לבן ישי משיחך
 במהירה בימינו
 ובכן צדיקים יראו וישמחו
 וישרים יעלוזו
 וחסידים ברינה יגילו

Shanah Halkha, Shanah Ba'ah

Shanah halkha, shanah ba'ah
Ani kapai arimah
Shanah tovah l'kha abba
Shanah tovah lakh eema
Shanah tova

A year comes,
 A year goes
 I raise my hands up high
 Happy New Year, dad
 Happy New Year, mom
 Happy New Year

שנה הלכה, שנה באה

שנה הלכה, שנה באה
 אני כפי ארימה
 שנה טובה לך אבא
 שנה טובה לך אמא
 שנה טובה

Bashanah Haba-ah

Bashanah haba-ah, Neshev ahl hamirpeset
V'nispor tziporim nodedot
Y'ladam bahoofsha, yisahaku tofesset
Bein habayit l'vein hasadot
Ohd tireh, ohd tireh
Kamah tov yihiyeh
Bashanah (2x) habaah } 2x

In the next year, we'll sit on the porch
 And count the birds.
 Children will play tag in the yard
 Between the house and the fields
 You'll yet see, how good things will be
 In the coming year.

בשנה הבאה

בשנה הבאה נשב על המרפסת
 ונספור צפורים נודדות
 ילדים בחופשה, ישחקו תופסת
 בין הבית לבין השדות
 עוד תראה, עוד תראה
 כמה טוב יהיה
 בשנה בשנה הבאה

Shanah Tovah, Shanah M'tukah

Tapuhim b'dvash l'Rosh Hashanah
Tapuhim b'dvash l'Rosh Hashanah
Shanah tovah
Shanah m'tukah
Tapuhim b'dvash l'Rosh Hashanah

Apples and honey for Rosh Hashanah
 A good year, a sweet year

שנה טובה, שנה מתוקה

תפוחים בדבש לראש השנה
 תפוחים בדבש לראש השנה
 שנה טובה
 שנה מתוקה
 תפוחים בדבש לראש השנה

Anu Ba'anu Artza

Anu ba'anu Artza
Livnot u'l'hibanot bah

We have come to Israel
 To build and to be built.

אנו באנו ארצה

אנו באנו ארצה
 לבנות ולהבנות בה

VII. Activities

These activities are suggested for children in classes and/or groups or for families. Please select those most appropriate to the suitable age and grouping involved. See: Section VIII "Additional Resources."

1. Make a list comparing the Jewish New Year with other New Year celebrations (secular, Chinese, Greek Orthodox, etc.).
2. Map Study
Look at a map of Israel. Find: Haifa, Jerusalem, Gezer, the Mediterranean Sea.
3. Draw and/or cut out symbols of Rosh Hashanah (apples, honey, shofar, cards, etc.). Put them together for a poster to be displayed. The poster can be done individually or in groups.
4. Prepare some recipes using honey.
5. Prepare some dramatic presentations illustrating situations of asking forgiveness or begging pardon of a friend, neighbor and relative.
6. Make a diorama of any scene from the videotape. You can use all kinds of things to help: pipe cleaners, crayons, scissors, colored paper, yarn, cellophane, cotton, wire, tongue depressors, stones, playdough, etc. You can make a diorama of any size—from a small shoe box to a large appliance carton.
7. Write the following words and expressions in Hebrew. Use a dictionary, *Makhzor* (High Holiday Prayerbook) and/or Bible for help. Have group members exchange lists and correct themselves.

<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	ראש השנה
<i>Shofar</i>	שופר
<i>Tshuvah</i>	תשובה
<i>Akeidah</i>	עקדה
<i>Tashlikh</i>	תשליך
<i>Tkiyah</i>	תקיעה
<i>Truah</i>	תרועה
<i>Sh'varim</i>	שברים
<i>Tkiyah G'dolah</i>	תקיעה גדולה

8. Consult a *Makhzor* to find, read and explain the following prayers:
 - Prayer for the New Year (Evening Service)
 - Tik'u Bakhodesh Shofar* תקעו בחודש שופר (Evening Service)
 - Kiddush
 - Sounding of the Shofar (After the Torah reading)
 - Any of the *malkhuyot* מלכויות (*Musaf*)
 - Any of the *Zikhrnot* זכרונות (*Musaf Amidah*)
 - Any of the *Shofrot* שופרות (*Musaf Amidah*)
 - U'n'taneh Tokef* ונתנה תוקף (*Musaf Amidah*)
9. Find the following selections in the Bible. Read and discuss:
 - Psalm 37 (Why is this repeated seven times?)
 - Psalm 81: 4,5
 - Chapter 14 of Hosea
 - Genesis 22
10. Create a list of New Year's Resolutions. How many are between individuals? Between an individual and God? According to Maimonides, the purpose of blowing the shofar is to return to our beginning by making new beginnings within ourselves—all bound up with the concept of Repentance. Make a list of new beginnings for yourself.
11. Write a prayer that could be used in a creative Rosh Hashanah service. (Themes might deal with: God, Holiness, Remembrance, Repentance, Forgiveness, etc.).
12. Find and chant the two blessings that the blower of the shofar recites. (*V'tzivanu lishmoa kol Shofar* ויצונו לשמע קול שופר; *Shehekhiyanu* שהחיינו.) Is there anything strange about the blessing for the shofar? Note that the blessing is upon hearing the shofar.

VIII. Additional Resources

Arzt, Max, *Justice and Mercy*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1963.

Bin Nun, Judy and Franne Einhorn, *Rosh Hashana: A Holiday Funtext*, UAHC, New York (Grades 1-3).

Encyclopaedia Judaica, Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, 1973.

Fass, David, *The Shofar That Lost Its Voice*, UAHC, New York, 1982 (Grades 1-3).

Goodman, Philip, *The Rosh Hashanah Anthology*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1970 (Adult).

Greenfield, Howard, *Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York, 1979 (A children's book).

Homestart, Behrman House, New York, 1985.

Miller, Amos W., *Abraham, Friend of God*, Jonathan David Publishers, Middle Village, NY, 1973.

Mindel, Nissan, *The Complete Story of Tishrei*, Merkos L'inyonei Chinuch, New York, 1982 (Grades 7 and up).

Nathan, Joan, *The Jewish Holiday Cookbook*, Schocken Books, New York, 1979.

Ross, Lillian, *The Fall Holidays and the School Connection*, Central Agency for Jewish Education, Miami, FL, 1978 (Source materials for all grade levels).

Siegel, Richard, Strassfeld, Michael, and Strassfeld, Sharon, *The Jewish Catalog*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1973.

Strassfeld, Michael, *The Jewish Holidays, A Guide and Commentary*, Harper & Row, New York, 1985

Syme, Daniel B., *The Jewish Home Book 4, High Holy Days*, UAHC, New York, 1977.

For a more complete annotated and graded listing, please contact: National Educational Resource Center, Jewish Education Service of North America, Inc., 730 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

13. How many of the following questions can you answer? It's fine to consult the encyclopedia, the Bible, a rabbi, teacher, or any other source.
 - a) Where in Leviticus and Numbers is the procedure of shofar blowing comanded? (Lev. 25:9 and 23:24 and Numbers 29:1)
 - b) Find sections in the Prayerbook which describe the pattern of shofar notes.
 - c) Where is the shofar kept during the service before it is blown?
 - d) How many cycles of blowing the shofar are there? (three).
 - e) Describe the difference between the first 2 cycles and the next. (*T'kiyah g'dolah* תקיעה גדולה).
 - f) What animal's horns can be used to make a shofar? (ram, antelope, gazelle, goat or Rocky Mountain goat). Which cannot be used? Why?
 - g) Why is the sacrifice of Isaac connected with the sounding of the shofar?
 - h) Where does the word Shofar come from? (the root meaning hollow). What does it mean?
14. Learning to blow a shofar correctly takes a lot of practice. One must also learn the laws about how and when to blow. A special mitzvah is visiting sick and/or elderly people who cannot attend services and blowing the shofar for them.
15. Write a "letter" to someone your age in another country and/or from another period of history who knows nothing about Rosh Hashanah. Make sure you mention at least 3 symbols of the holiday; 3 Hebrew expressions connected with the holiday; 3 customs of the holiday.
16. Create five different greetings that could be used for Rosh Hashanah cards. Then, create the cards using the greetings. These could be in verse form and should be beautifully and artistically decorated. You can use drawings, potato prints, calligraphy, etc.
17. Exchange a wish for the New Year (written on paper and unsigned) with each member of your family.
18. Some Rosh Hashanah customs that aren't included in the video may make for interesting topics of discussion and/or activities —
 - a) Tashlikh
 - b) The other Jewish New Years
 - c) New moons, leap year and the Jewish calendar
19. Have group members select topics for individual projects about Rosh Hashanah which they can complete (even within the month after the holiday is celebrated). The project should involve background reading and research, but can take a variety of forms: art, reporting, essay, poetry, music, drama, lecture presentation, multimedia, etc. The completed projects can then become the basis for an assembly presentation; a final program for end-of-the-year activities; a videotape; a travelling show, etc.
20. Prepare a program with classmates or friends that can be taken "on the road" to a hospital; a home for the aged; another school. It could include the blowing of the shofar (needs a lot of practice), appropriate songs, dramatic presentations, etc.
21. The *Akeidah* עקדה is not considered a punishment from God. Rather, it was a test of character, love and faith. Can you make a list of other such tests?
22. Some sages believe that Moriah, the mount of the *Akeidah* story comes from the word *Hora'ah* הוראה. Why is that a logical and pleasing interpretation? You'll need a dictionary, perhaps some readings in Chronicles II 3:1, and Rashi to help you answer this question.
23. There are many *Piyyutim* (Hymns) composed that are included in the Rosh Hashanah service. Some of these are in alphabetical acrostic. (Find such a *piyyut* for an example in the *musaf* service after the "*K'dushah*" and the "*Sh'ma*"). Write your own *piyyut* (in English and Hebrew if you can) on any appropriate subject, using the alphabet acrostic form. You might add a line of "*V'chol Maaminim*" וְכֹל מְאִמִּינִים ("and all believe") in between each line.
24. List and/or draw other symbols for the shofar (alarm clock, trumpet, whistle, etc.).
25. Make a shofar (see Strassfeld, p. 99).

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