

# THE APPLE OF HIS EYE SEPTEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



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## Two New Years on ONE day - 9/15/2023

By Steve Cohen

**First it was my 74<sup>th</sup> birthday.**



**Second, Friday evening, September 15<sup>th</sup> (or 1 Tishre in the Jewish calendar) marked the beginning of the Jewish New Year 5784.** Rosh Ha Shannah – or the head of the year – celebrated in the synagogue with traditional liturgies and especially the sounding of the shofar – the ram’s horn. We are to hear 100 notes on the shofar that evening.

**Why is the shofar sounded?** Rabbis have various responses:

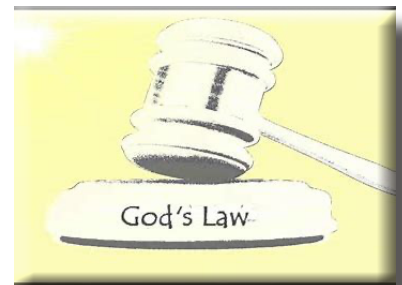
1. Rosh Hashanah is the day that commemorates the creation of the world and it is described as the “coronation” of Hashem (G-d). As it is customary to sound a trumpet at a king’s coronation so we blow the shofar on Rosh Hashanah. By blowing the shofar we recognize the “purpose” of the creation.
2. The shofar blast marks the beginning of a period of amnesty which is known as The Ten Days of Repentance. Repentance: since humanity has been given free-will, and our actions are not pre-determined, we must take responsibility for our actions. The ability to repent teaches us that our future is not bound by our past and that by changing our behavior we have the ability to change from our past.
3. When we accepted the Torah at Mount Sinai, the sound of the shofar is described as “continuously increased and was very great” (Exodus 19:19). The shofar serves to remind us of the revelation at Mt. Sinai and therefore to renew our commitment to Hashem and to accept that Torah morality is absolute and God given - not relative, nor does it depend on human understanding.
4. The prophets called out to the Jewish People and aroused them to improve their ways. The shofar reminds us of the admonitions of the prophets and their calls to repentance. We should know the Lord communicated with us, via the prophets,

and displayed through them His desire to perfect us and not to punish us.

5. The shofar reminds us to pray for the rebuilding of the Temple where trumpets and shofars were sounded. God manifests His presence in the world in specific places like the Temple in Jerusalem. He also manifests His presence at special times, such as the Ten Days of Repentance.
6. The ram's horn reminds us of the Binding of Isaac when Abraham demonstrated his absolute faith by being prepared to sacrifice his son. The Lord demonstrated His absolute love for Abraham by having him sacrifice a ram in his place.
7. The sound of the shofar is supposed to inspire fear in the hearts of those who hear it. It allows one to dwell upon fear of punishment, to progress from there to fear of doing evil and then to fear of God.
8. The shofar reminds us of the day of judgment in the future.
9. The sound inspires us to yearn for the ingathering of the Exiles, that will be heralded by the sound of a shofar. There will be absolute unity amongst the Jewish People and our connection to Land of Israel will again be absolute.
10. The shofar recalls the resurrection of the dead which will be accompanied by the sound of a shofar. As God is the source of all life and the creator of all existence so He has complete control over death.

#### **Additional reasons from other sources:**

- The shofar ushers in the Divine court session and shows our trust in Hashem's judgement. By showing our eagerness to be judged by Hashem we thus confuse the heavenly prosecutor, the Satan. <https://ohr.edu/1191>



#### **Why does the Jewish new year occur in Tishri, the seventh month?**

Judaism has several different 'new years'.

- In Judaism, Nissan 1 is the new year for the purpose of counting the reign of kings and months on the calendar.
- Elul 1 (in August) is the new year for the tithing of animals.
- Shevat 15 (in February) is the new year for trees (this determines when first fruits can be eaten, etc.)
- Tishri 1 (**Rosh Hashanah**) is the new year for years.

Rabbinical tradition tells us that one way we can help ensure that our names are inscribed in the book of life is to give to others in our communities. Giving is particularly important during

the Days of Awe, which are the ten days which lie between the Jewish holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

According to the Talmud, God opens three books of destiny on Rosh Hashanah. If our deeds are good, he writes our names in the Book of Life. If our deeds are wicked, he writes our names in the Book of Death – but if our deeds fall somewhere in between, they are written in a third book. God suspends judgment on those whose names he writes in this book. If our names are written in it, we have ten days more to change our hearts and lives – but on Yom Kippur our fates are sealed.

Evidence of the existence of these books of destiny can be found in Exodus, in which Moses – confessing to God that the Israelites have worshiped the golden calf, pleads for God’s forgiveness. He asks God to blot out his name from the book God has written if God will not forgive his people. This book is mentioned again in Psalms 69, in which the psalmist asks God to let the names of his adversaries be “blotted out of the book of the living.”

Having our names blotted out from the book of the living is a daunting prospect – especially during certain Jewish holidays. According to Jewish tradition (NOT THE BIBLE) we can do three things to help make sure God writes our names in the book of life:

First, we can repent of the evil deeds we have done in the past.

Second, we can engage in meaningful prayer.

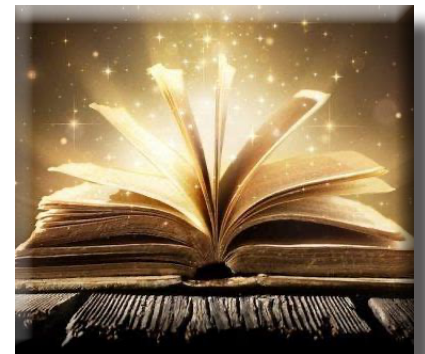
Third, we can charitable giving. Giving to the poor is particularly important to God, who holds them in high regard.

These books remain open for ten days known as the Days of Awe in which we seek to make right those offenses we have caused to our fellow man.

God also makes it clear that he wants us to help the poor. Indeed, he commands us to do so, saying, “If, however, there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman.”

***We who know Messiah know that there is a book, The Lamb’s Book of life, and those whose names are written by the blood of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world can know for sure that they are sealed for a great eternity.***

**Rev. 21:22** And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. <sup>24</sup> By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, <sup>25</sup> and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. <sup>26</sup> They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. <sup>27</sup> But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life. ESV



# WHY DO BIRDS SUDDENLY APPEAR?

WRITTEN BY NANCY COHEN ON 28 SEPTEMBER 2023.

When my daughter Toi was born, it was basically just myself and her. It was the 1960's and as per our life then, her dad was drafted and subsequently enlisted so he could choose his own branch of service. We were still in college, but it did not matter. He was an only child, but it did not matter. Viet Nam was in full swing, and you went when called...

“Why do birds suddenly appear, every time you are near? Just like me, they want to be close to you.”

The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you but will rejoice over you with singing. (Zeph. 3:17, NIV)

...Of course, I thought it was the end of the world. First boot camp, then AIT, then jump school, then on to the JFK center for Special Forces (he was a green beret). Thanks to my in-laws, when Toi was three months old, he was able to see her on a 3-day pass while in one of his schools.

Toi became my comfort and joy and constant companion. Every morning I would sing her Burt Bacharach's song “Close to You”. That song became a link for us as she grew into a little girl and on into teens and adulthood. Sometimes I would cry as I sang it – then laugh when she would sing “cos to you”, in her sweet baby voice. It was a precious bonding time for us. It was an expression of love and memories every time I sang it. I had songs for my boys too, and then my grandchildren. My granddaughter Ali sometimes sings with me when I sing “her song” (and she's in college!). It's personal. It's just for them. It's a form of love.

You can imagine the joy I felt when I read this verse: “The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love, he will no longer rebuke you but will rejoice over you with singing.”

The Lord my God is with me. The Mighty Warrior who saves. He delights in me! Me! He delights in me! Just as I am. I don't even delight in me. In HIS love He will no longer rebuke me!

Just as I am - without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidst me come to Thee,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - poor, wretched, blind;  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,  
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - Thou wilt receive,  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;  
Because Thy promise I believe,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am - Thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down;  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
-O Lamb of God, I come!



But the part of the verse that blew me away is that He, my Heavenly Father, rejoices over me with song. He sings over me! It's a paradox for me to understand. I understand the love of singing over my child, but God loves me, in spite of my unworthiness, to the degree of singing over me! As my sweet Israeli friend Yael would say: Wow. Wow. Wow!

What do I (we), do with the love of God? Hide it? Ignore it? How about sharing it? That's all he asks of us. Share it.

...Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19, NIV)

See what the Word of God says? Go and make disciples of all nations. We have such an opportunity here in the States to reach the world. Our neighbors are from everywhere! I have Mexican neighbors. I have had repairmen from Russia, South Africa, and Ireland. Toi has local friends from Africa, Eastern Europe, and Barcelona. My granddaughter has a friend in college from Japan. My son will be preaching to a congregation of Pakistanis next month. The world is in our backyard!

Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20, ESV)  
We are ambassadors!

What a privilege to serve and what short days we have left to do His bidding.

P.S. Happy New Year 5784! Happy Birthday Steve Cohen, beloved servant of God. May you be blessed with many more years of use for the Master.

Love from my heart,

nanC

Nancy Cohen is the Director of Women's Ministries at Apple of His Eye



# PARTNERSHIP

WRITTEN BY JORDAN PEISER.

When Paul remembered all the Philippians did for him, he was filled with joy and thankful to God for them and the work He was doing in their community. He saw them joining together as a church to serve each other, to proclaim the love of Jesus, and to support the ministry of St. Paul...



I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:3-6, ESV).

...St. Paul called this a partnership (*koinōnia*) in the Gospel! *koinōnia* is a word that is used for the Lord's Supper, as when Paul says: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation (*koinōnia*) in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation (*koinōnia*) in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:16-17 ESV).

In other words, it is a word that expresses a deep connection that is found in, and upheld by, the Lord. The "partnership in the Gospel," is a shared mission through prayer, financial support, and ministry that is upheld, enjoyed, and strengthened by and in the Lord.

The partnership in the Gospel proclaims the love of Jesus and uses our individual talents and situations to call others into the fellowship that the Holy Spirit creates through the Word of God!

That is why I was humbled and deeply grateful to receive a note (see below) from a brother pastor explaining that our newsletter and a speaking event that we did moved their congregation to do a Rosh Hashanah basket outreach as a way of proclaiming the love and hope of Jesus to their neighbors!

Thank you to this congregation and to all of you who are fellowshiping and partnering with us in the Gospel. The Lord blesses in such a rich variety of ways, so that more people may know the hope of Jesus.

Our prayer is that the Lord would use our partnerships in the Gospel to bring more people into our fellowship of faith.

Thank you to all of you for your continued support and the many and various ways that you partner with us in the Gospel, whether it is financially, through prayer, by planning outreach events. Our ministry is a joint effort that would not be possible without you.



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August 21, 2023

Rev. Jordan Peiser  
The Apple of His Eye Mission Society  
PO Box 1649  
Brentwood, TN 37024-1649

Dear Jordan,



Greetings in Jesus' name. It was good to see you at the LCMS Convention earlier this month. I am sorry we did not have more time to be together (I did not realize how much the Election floor committee would take of my time there!)

I have enclosed for you the donations and the sign-ups for your newsletter we received in response to your visit at our church on June 11. We will also take the advice you gave us (and wrote about in your blog) about giving out Rosh Hashanah baskets to our Jewish friends. Our congregation was enthused with this outreach project and we have planned to undertake it in September. I will let you know how this mission project turns out.

Thank you for coming to our church and inspiring us regarding evangelism to our Jewish friends and neighbors. I pray that we can expand on this mission work in the near future.

In our Messiah's service,

Dr. L. Richard Vossler

# THE HAT...

BY STEVE COHEN

I know that there are many things that can start a conversation. Sometimes it is a message on a shirt, a logo on a jacket, or even world events that swirl around us. This summer when we were in Milwaukee for the LCMS national convention to set up our display, Jordan Peiser brought along a hat with two words on it in Hebrew...

Can you figure it out? I couldn't. Neither could Nancy.

But then Jordan told us it was...

(Vite Sox) White Sox. Enjoy!



# FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Pray for Micha Cohen, who has been placed back into hospice care. Please pray for Leah, him, and their family as he nears the end of a long battle with Huntington's Disease.

Pray for Jordan Peiser who will have minor surgery coming up in October.

Pray for our faithful donor correspondent, Debby Williams, whose mother was promoted to heaven recently.

Pray for our friends at Jews for Jesus who celebrated their 50th anniversary this month.

Pray for those who lost much in Africa over floods and earthquakes.

Pray for an openness to the Gospel by those we meet with and tell of Y'shua.

Pray for peace in the Middle East through the Prince of Peace.

Pray for the Lord to raise up the next leader of Apple of His Eye so that we might continue our mission service to new generations.

Pray for others to stand with us in witness and mission support in our 27th year.

THANK YOU!

Steve Cohen is the founder of Apple of His Eye

