

*שערות השנה*  
*Gates of the Seasons*

A GUIDE TO THE  
JEWISH YEAR

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The Days  
of Awe

YAMIM NORA-IM

## ROSH HASHANAH

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a holy day commemorated with loud blasts.

—LEVITICUS 23:24

In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a holy day; you shall not work at your occupations. You shall observe it as a day when the horn is sounded.

—NUMBERS 29:1

On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the Torah before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand, and he read from it facing in front of the Water Gate from early morning till noon.

—NEHEMIAH 8:2-3

**R**OSH Hashanah, which falls on the first of the Hebrew month of Tishri, marks the beginning of the new year.<sup>79</sup> It is, however, far more than the first day of the calendar year. It is the beginning of a ten-day period of rigorous self-examination which continues through Yom Kippur.<sup>80</sup> So important did the Rabbis consider this period, that they proclaimed the whole of the preceding month of Elul as a period of preparation.<sup>81</sup>

The Torah designates the first of Tishri as a day of "memorial, proclaimed with the blast of horns" (Leviticus 23:24, Numbers 29:1). For Jews the sound of the *Shofar* became a multi-faceted symbol recalling past events, looking to the Messianic future, proclaiming divine sovereignty—and much more.<sup>82</sup> The sound of the *Shofar* is a call to hearken to the divine summons, to examine our hearts, and to plead our case before the Eternal Judge.

Rabbinic tradition identifies Rosh Hashanah as *Yom Hadin*, Judgment Day, and in this spirit a Talmudic parable<sup>83</sup> pictures God as sitting in judgment of the world and each individual on Rosh Hashanah. The image of God as judge, about to inscribe human beings according to their deeds in the appropriate Book of Life, underscores the Jewish concept of human beings as moral free agents responsible for the choices which they make. We are further encouraged to believe that our fate, and indeed the fate of the entire world, depends upon our every act.<sup>84</sup>

Following from the theme of divine judgment is the concept of making amends for the past and beginning the year with a clean slate. According to Judaic tradition, "repentance, prayer, and charity (*Teshuvah*, *Tefilah*, and *Tzedakah*) temper judgment's severe decree."<sup>85</sup> Through these *mitzvot* Jews seek to re-establish their relationship with God and with other human beings and accomplish reconciliation with both.

The theme of Rosh Hashanah is that in spite of human weakness

"the gates of repentance are always open."<sup>86</sup> The struggle for righteousness never ceases. The *mitzvot* and customs of Rosh Hashanah are designed to help Jews enter into the new year with a new spirit so that they might be "inscribed in the Book of Life and Blessing."

## A. ROSH HASHANAH

### A-1 The month of Elul

**אֵלוּל** It is a *mitzvah* to prepare for the Days of Awe during the preceding month of Elul.<sup>87</sup> Special penitential prayers called **סְלִיחוֹת** *Selichot* are added to the daily liturgy,<sup>88</sup> and many congregations have a late night *Selichot* service, usually on the Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah.<sup>89</sup> The text of the service may be found in *Gates of Forgiveness*. Some congregations follow the custom of blowing the *Shofar* each weekday during the month of Elul as a reminder of the approaching season of atonement.<sup>90</sup>

Since proper preparation includes serious reflection and self-examination, it is important to set aside regular periods of time for contemplation and study. The High Holy Day liturgy of *Gates of Repentance* and S. Y. Agnon's *Days of Awe* are particularly appropriate texts for study.

It is customary to visit the graves of relatives during the month of Elul and during the Ten Days of Repentance.<sup>91</sup> Through such visits, links to preceding generations are reinforced, and by contemplating the virtues of the deceased and their devotion to faith and people, we find strength. (An appropriate prayer to recite at the grave may be found in *Gates of the House*, page 217.)

### A-2 The *mitzvah* of observing Rosh Hashanah

It is a *mitzvah* to observe Rosh Hashanah on the first of Tishri. As the Torah teaches, "In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe a sacred occasion: You shall not work at your occupations. You shall observe it as a day when the *Shofar* is sounded" (Numbers 29:1).

A-3 The *mitzvah* of repentance (*Teshuvah*)

תשובה  
תפלה  
צדקה

It is a *mitzvah* to express one's personal repentance (*Teshuvah*) on Rosh Hashanah.<sup>92</sup> According to the traditional symbolism, God sits in judgment of the world on Rosh Hashanah.<sup>93</sup> Through repentance (*Teshuvah*), prayer (*Tefilah*), and charity (*Tzedakah*), one begins moving towards reconciliation with God and other human beings. This process reaches its climax on Yom Kippur.

Repentance begins with the recognition of one's faults, failures, and weaknesses and the willingness to attempt to change and rectify impaired relationships. Through discussion with friends and family, one seeks understanding and forgiveness. The reciting of confessional prayers opens the heart to repentance. The goal of repentance is to turn לשוב (*lashuv*) the individual and the community toward each other and toward God.<sup>94</sup>

A-4 The *mitzvah* of *Tzedakah*

צדקה

It is always a *mitzvah* to give *Tzedakah*, but on Rosh Hashanah, this *mitzvah* takes on added significance.<sup>95</sup> *Tzedakah* is one of the *mitzvot* which tempers judgment's "severe decree." Through direct aid to the needy and to the institutions which serve the needy and through aid to synagogues and other institutions which support the spiritual and cultural life of the Jewish community, we exemplify our obligation as human beings to share the bounty of the earth with others. The period immediately before Rosh Hashanah is an especially appropriate time to fulfill this *mitzvah*.

In many homes, it is the custom to deposit money in the *Tzedakah* box as one comes to the table for the lighting of the candles before the festive meal.

A-5 The *mitzvot* of the Holy Day

Shabbat observance is the model for the observance of Rosh Hashanah and all other major festivals.<sup>96</sup> The fol-

lowing *mitzvot* are common to both Shabbat and Rosh Hashanah: (1) Preparation (see "Shabbat," A-9); (2) including guests at the festive table (see "Shabbat," A-10); (3) lighting candles (see "Shabbat," A-12); (4) *Kiddush* (see "Shabbat," A-13); (5) blessing children (see "Shabbat," A-14); (6) *Hamotsi* (see "Shabbat," A-15)<sup>97</sup>; and (7) grace after meals (see "Shabbat," A-17). Some of the blessings and prayers differ from those on Shabbat. The text may be found in *Gates of the House*, pages 6-18, 41-48.

קדוש

המוציא

## A-6 Apples and honey

It is customary to dip a piece of apple in honey and to eat it after reciting the appropriate blessing. The apple and honey symbolize the hope for a good and sweet year. The text of the prayer is as follows:

יהי רצון מלפניך, יי אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו,  
שתחדש עלינו שנה טובה ומתקה.

*Ye-hi ra-tson mi-le-fa-nei-cha, A-do-nai E-lo-bei-nu  
ve-lo-bei a-vo-tei-nu, she-te-cha-desh a-lei-nu sha-na  
to-va u-me-tu-ka.*

*Lord our God and God of our people, may the new year be  
good and sweet for us.*

ברוך אתה, יי אלהינו, מלך העולם, בורא פרי העץ.

*Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai E-lo-bei-nu, me-lech ha-o-lam,  
bo-re pe-ri ha-ets.*

*Blessed are You, O Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,  
creator of the fruit of the tree.*

A-7 The *mitzvah* of congregational worship

It is a *mitzvah* to join the congregation in worship on Rosh Hashanah.<sup>98</sup> As members of the Jewish people, we have

personal and communal responsibilities. Participation in the congregational worship service is one such communal obligation, but our attendance at services goes beyond obligation. The public celebration of Rosh Hashanah through prayer, song, and Torah study is the heart of the Rosh Hashanah experience. Rosh Hashanah worship draws us into the circle of the community, strengthening our ties to one another and to the historical values that we Jews hold dear. If illness prevents attendance at services, Rosh Hashanah prayers should be recited at home.

For a discussion of the special features of the services and the Torah and *Haftarah* selections, see "Fragments of Faith: On Holy Day Liturgy," pages 147–153, and "Torah and *Haftarah* Readings," pages 155–159.

#### A-8 The *mitzvah* of hearing the *Shofar*

**שופר** It is a *mitzvah* to hear the sound of the *Shofar* on Rosh Hashanah, as the Torah teaches, "You shall observe it as a day when the horn is sounded" (Numbers 29:1).<sup>99</sup> Jewish tradition is rich with explanations for the meaning of the *Shofar*.<sup>100</sup> The liturgy of the *Shofar* service emphasizes the themes of God's sovereignty (*Malchuyot*), reminiscences of encounters between God and Israel (*Zichronot*), and God's promise of redemption (*Shofarot*) (see "Fragments of Faith: On Holy Day Liturgy," pages 147–153, and *Gates of Repentance*, pages 138–151). As the *Shofar* is sounded, one should concentrate on its meaning and hearken to its call.<sup>101</sup> Provisions should be made so that those unable to attend the synagogue because of illness or infirmity may hear the sound of the *Shofar*.

**מלכיות**  
**זכרונות**  
**שופרות**

#### A-9 The *mitzvah* of refraining from work on Rosh Hashanah

It is a *mitzvah* to refrain from work on Rosh Hashanah. As the Torah teaches, "In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest" (Leviticus 23:23). (See also "Shabbat," A-5, page 22). Chil-

dren and university students should not attend classes, and all who are able should attend synagogue services.

#### A-10 Greetings on Rosh Hashanah

It is a time-honored tradition to greet friends and neighbors during the Days of Awe, especially on Rosh Hashanah, by expressing the wish that they be blessed with a good year. The traditional words of blessing, whether uttered personally or sent through the mail, are "לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתְּבוּ," "*Le-sha-na to-va ti-ka-te-vu*" ("May you be inscribed [in the Book of Life] for a good year"). After Rosh Hashanah one might say "גְּמַר חֲתִימָה טוֹבָה," "*Ge-mar cha-ti-ma to-va*" ("May the final decree be good"); or "לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּחְתְּמוּ," "*Le-sha-na to-va te-cha-te-mu*" ("May you be sealed [in the Book of Life] for a good year").

#### A-11 Visiting with friends and relatives

On Rosh Hashanah it is customary to visit with friends and relatives, to wish them well. Such visits are part of the joy (*Simchah*) of the festival.

**שמחה**

#### A-12 The Second Day of Rosh Hashanah

Although Reform Judaism has adopted the calendar of the Torah observing Rosh Hashanah for only one day (Leviticus 23:24 and Numbers 29:21), there are some congregations that have adopted the custom of the Land of Israel observing Rosh Hashanah for two days (see "The Jewish Calendar," pages 7–11).

#### A-13 Mourning on Rosh Hashanah

**שבועה** Formal mourning (i.e., the observance of *Shiv-ah*) is suspended for the observance of Rosh Hashanah, at which time the mourners should attend services and observe the customs of the day (see "Shabbat," A-23, page 31). Tra-

dition prescribes the complete termination of formal mourning when a festival intervenes.<sup>102</sup> While Reform Judaism agrees to the suspension of formal mourning for the holy day itself, it is left to the family to decide whether or not to resume *Shiv-ah* after a festival, particularly when the festival falls within a day or two of the death (*Gates of Mitzvah*, "Death and Mourning," page 60, D-3).

#### A-14 The *mitzvah* of *Havdalah*

הַבְּדִלָּה

At the conclusion of Rosh Hashanah it is a *mitzvah* to recite *Havdalah* prayers separating the holy from the ordinary—Rosh Hashanah from the other days of the year.<sup>103</sup> The text of *Havdalah* may be found in *Gates of the House*, page 71.

THE ten-day period from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur is known as *Aseret Yemei Teshuvah*, the Ten Days of Repentance.<sup>104</sup> On Rosh Hashanah the Jew takes the first steps toward atonement. But this initial recognition of sin with its accompanying remorse requires further steps to complete the process of repentance.<sup>105</sup>

Activities during this period should be directed toward the sacred goal of reconciliation with both God and other human beings. Jewish tradition teaches that Yom Kippur makes atonement only for those sins which we commit against God, but it does not atone for those sins which we commit against other human beings unless we first attempt to make amends and seek their forgiveness.<sup>106</sup>

The mood of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur permeates these days. A high point during this period is *Shabbat Shuvah*, the Sabbath of Return. Turning toward God and toward other people is the purpose of these days.

### B. ASERET YEMEI TESHUVAH (TEN DAYS OF REPENTANCE)

#### B-1 The *mitzvah* of self-examination

It is a *mitzvah* to reflect upon our behavior during the ten-day period beginning with Rosh Hashanah and concluding with Yom Kippur, and to determine how to improve ourselves in the new year.<sup>107</sup> During these intervening days one should set aside a period each day for reflection and self-examination.

### B-2 The *mitzvah* of reconciliation

It is a *mitzvah* to seek reconciliation during the Ten Days of Repentance with those whom one may have hurt or harmed during the past year. Our tradition teaches, "For transgressions against God, the Day of Atonement atones; but for transgressions of one human being against another, the Day of Atonement does not atone until they have made peace with one another."<sup>108</sup> It is appropriate to approach any person whom we might have offended in order to bring about reconciliation.

### B-3 The *mitzvah* of forgiveness

It is a *mitzvah* to forgive a person who has wronged you during the past year and who seeks your forgiveness.<sup>109</sup> The Talmud states: "A person should be as pliant as a reed and not hard like a cedar in granting forgiveness."<sup>110</sup> Bearing a grudge is destructive to both parties and subverts the purposes of the Ten Days of Repentance.

### B-4 Visiting graves of relatives

Many observe the custom of visiting the graves of relatives during this period and of reciting prayers in their memory.<sup>111</sup> Texts of appropriate prayers may be found in *Gates of the House*, page 217.

### B-5 *Shabbat Shuvah*

שַׁבַּת שׁוּבָה  
הַפְּטָרָה  
שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל

The Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is known as *Shabbat Shuvah*. Its name is derived from the first word of the *Haftarah*, Hosea 14:2-10, which begins with the words "*Shuvah Yisra-el*, Return O Israel." One should make a special effort to attend *Shabbat Shuvah* services in order to hear the reading of this *Haftarah* as an introspective prelude to Yom Kippur.





## YOM KIPPUR

For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be clean. It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you and you shall practice self-denial; it is a law for all time.

—LEVITICUS 16:30–31

Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. . . . For it is the Day of Atonement on which expiation is made on your behalf before the Lord your God. . . . Do no work whatever; it is a law for all time, throughout the generations in your settlements. It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you and you shall practice self-denial; on the ninth day of the month at evening from evening to evening, you shall observe this your sabbath.

—LEVITICUS 23:27–28,31–32

On the tenth day of the same seventh month you shall observe a sacred occasion when you shall practice self-denial.

—NUMBERS 29:7

YOM Kippur, the Day of Atonement, occurs on the tenth of Tishri (Leviticus 23:27). It is the culmination of the Ten Days of Repentance. It alone of all the Jewish holidays is the equivalent of Shabbat in sanctity.<sup>112</sup> Its mood is reflective and introspective—a day devoted totally to self-examination, confession, and atonement.

Yom Kippur provides us with the opportunity to alter our conduct, readjust our values, and set things right in our lives. The day demands absolute honesty as we confess our wrongdoings: "We have sinned, we have transgressed, we have done perversely."<sup>113</sup> The grandeur of the liturgy and music adds to the drama and seriousness of the day. From *Kol Nidrei*, the eve of Yom Kippur, to the last triumphant note of the *Shofar* at the conclusion of the *Ne-ilah*, its purpose is to move us toward reconciliation with God and our fellow human beings.

Primary among the *mitzvot* leading to atonement is fasting. The Torah says three times, "And this shall be to you a law for all times! In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month you shall practice self-denial" (Leviticus 16:29 and 23:27; Numbers 29:7). Tradition interprets "self-denial" as fasting, and the threefold repetition of this *mitzvah* in the Torah has suggested three reasons for fasting as described in our prayerbook.

Judaism calls for self-discipline. When we control our appetites on Yom Kippur, we remember that on other days, too, we can be masters, not slaves, of our desires.

Judaism calls for empathy. When we consciously experience hunger, we are more likely to consider millions who need no Yom Kippur in order to suffer hunger. For some, most days are days without food enough for themselves and their children.

Judaism calls for penitence. The confession we make with our lips is a beginning. The penance we inflict upon our bodies through fasting, leads us along further still toward the acknowledgment that we have sinned against ourselves and others.

(*Gates of Repentance*, page 229)

Yom Kippur is a day of concentration on the past so that the future may be better for us as individuals, better for us as a community, and better for us as part of the human community. Despite its solemnity, Yom Kippur is also a day of joy, when the truly penitent person begins gradually to feel at one with God and humankind. Reconciliation is the goal of the day's prayers and fast. When the final blast of the *Shofar* is heard at the end of *Ne-ilah*, those who have observed the day with sincerity should feel that they have been inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.

## C. YOM KIPPUR

### C-1 The *mitzvah* of observing Yom Kippur

It is a *mitzvah* to observe Yom Kippur on the tenth of the Hebrew month of Tishri. As the Torah says, "Mark the tenth day of this seventh month as the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you. . . . For it is the Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before the Lord your God" (Leviticus 23:27–28).

### C-2 The *mitzvah* of repentance (*Teshuvah*)

It is a *mitzvah* to repent on Yom Kippur.<sup>114</sup> As the intense ten-day period of self-examination, reflection, and reconciliation initiated on Rosh Hashanah reaches its climax, the recitation of confessional prayers brings into sharp focus our shortcomings and failures which alienate us from God.

תשובה It is through repentance (*Teshuvah*) that we return to God and find God returning to us.<sup>115</sup>

### C-3 The *mitzvah* of reconciliation

It is a *mitzvah* for each person to seek reconciliation with members of his or her family and with all those one might have offended before the onset of Yom Kippur.<sup>116</sup> One should not enter into the sacred day of reconciliation without having made every effort at personal reconciliation.

### C-4 The *mitzvah* of *Tzedakah*

צדקה תפילה תשובה It is always a *mitzvah* to give *Tzedakah*.<sup>117</sup> However, *Tzedakah* (charity)—along with *Tefilah* (prayer) and *Teshuvah* (repentance)—is an integral part of Yom Kippur observance.

כפרה There is an old custom of setting aside money (referred to as *Kaparah*, atonement money) before sunset on the eve of Yom Kippur. Implicit in this act of *Kaparah* is the idea that this charity money serves as an atonement for one's sins.<sup>118</sup>

Therefore, it is especially appropriate before the onset of the day to perform specific acts of *Tzedakah* which will improve the spiritual and/or material well-being of the community.

### C-5 The meal on Erev Yom Kippur

המוציא ברכת המזון סעודה מפסקת Unlike the meal held on the eves of Sabbaths and other festivals, there are no special rituals connected with the Erev Yom Kippur meal, because it is eaten before the sacred day begins. The *mitzvot* of *Hamotsi* and *Birkat Hamazon* should be observed as at any meal. This meal, which is called *Se-udah Mafseket* (the concluding meal before a fast), should begin early so that it is completed before the onset of the Holy Day.<sup>119</sup>

It should be noted that *Kiddush* is not recited at this meal, which must be completed before the onset of Yom Kippur. Since the *Kiddush* usually sets aside the festival

as holy and may not be recited before the beginning of the festival, and since the *Kiddush* is normally recited over either wine or bread (neither of which may be consumed on Yom Kippur), *Kiddush* may not be recited at the *Seudah Mafseket*.

### C-6 The *mitzvah* of kindling Yom Kippur lights

It is a *mitzvah* to light and recite the appropriate blessing over the Yom Kippur lights after the meal and before leaving for the synagogue.<sup>120</sup>

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,  
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים.

Ba-ruch a-ta, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, me-lech ha-o-  
lam, a-she-ki-de-sha-nu be-mits-vo-tav ve-tsi-va-nu  
le-had-lik ner shel Yom Ha-ki-pu-rim.

*Blessed is the Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, by Whose mitzvot we are hallowed, Who commands us to kindle the lights of the Day of Atonement.*

The text of additional prayers may be found in *Gates of the House*, page 56.

Unlike on Shabbat and the other festivals, Yom Kippur candles are lit *after* the meal, because the lighting of the candles marks the formal beginning of Yom Kippur and therefore the beginning of the fast. Before lighting the Yom Kippur candles, it is customary to light a memorial candle, which will burn throughout the Holy Day. A single candle may be used for all who are to be remembered.

### C-7 The *mitzvah* of blessing children

It is a *mitzvah* for parents to bless their children before leaving for the synagogue. Families may establish their

own ritual or use the traditional words (see "Shabbat," A-14, page 27, or *Gates of the House*, page 57).

### C-8 The *mitzvah* of fasting

It is a *mitzvah* to fast throughout Yom Kippur.<sup>121</sup> The Torah (Leviticus 16:27 and 23:27) designates Yom Kippur as a day of self-denial or, more literally, affliction of the soul. Fasting requires self-discipline and is an attempt to control one's physical needs in order to concentrate on the spiritual. By symbolically denying the most basic biological necessity which humans share with all animals, we focus on that aspect of human nature which we share with God (see "Fasting on Yom Kippur," pages 146–147).

בַּר מִצְוָה  
בֵּית מִצְוָה

Children below the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah should be taught to fast by beginning with a few hours' fast and increasing it each year until at thirteen they fast throughout Yom Kippur.<sup>122</sup> A person who is ill or pregnant should follow the advice of a physician on fasting.<sup>123</sup>

שׁוֹפָר  
נְעִילָה

The fast begins with the kindling of Yom Kippur candles and concludes with the sounding of the *Shofar* at the end of *Ne-ilah*.

### C-9 The *mitzvah* of congregational worship

כָּל נִדְרֵי  
שׁוֹפָר  
נְעִילָה

It is a *mitzvah* to join the congregation in worship by attending the *Kol Nidrei* service on Yom Kippur night and the several services on Yom Kippur day until the sounding of the *Shofar* at the end of *Ne-ilah*.<sup>124</sup> As members of the Jewish people, we have personal and communal responsibilities. Participation in the congregational worship service is one such communal obligation, but our attendance at services goes beyond obligation. The public celebration of Yom Kippur through prayer, song, and Torah study is the heart of the Yom Kippur experience. Yom Kippur worship draws us into the circle of the community, strengthening our ties to one another and to the historical values that we Jews hold dear. If illness prevents atten-

dance at services, Yom Kippur prayers should be recited at home.

For a discussion of the special features of the services and the Torah and *Haftarah* selections, see "Fragments of Faith: On Holy Day Liturgy," pages 147–153, and "Torah and *Haftarah* Readings," pages 155–159.

#### C-10 The *mitzvah* of *Yizkor* (Memorial Service)

It is a *mitzvah* for every Jew to recite *Yizkor* on Yom Kippur.<sup>125</sup> Everyone should remain for *Yizkor* even if one's parents are alive, since *Yizkor* is a service of remembrance for the martyrs of our people as well as for our own relatives and friends (see *Gates of Mitzvah*, page 63, D-10, and "Yizkor," pages 153–155).

#### C-11 The *mitzvah* of refraining from work

It is a *mitzvah* to refrain from work on Yom Kippur. As the Torah states, "You shall do no work throughout that day. . . . It shall be a Shabbat of complete rest for you" (Leviticus 23:28, 32). The same strictures which apply to Shabbat apply to Yom Kippur which is known as the Sabbath of Sabbaths (see "Shabbat," A-5, page 22).

#### C-12 The *mitzvah* of *Havdalah*

At the conclusion of Yom Kippur it is a *mitzvah* to recite *Havdalah* separating the holy from the ordinary, separating Yom Kippur from the other days of the year.<sup>126</sup> The text of *Havdalah* may be found in *Gates of Repentance*, pages 526–528, and in *Gates of the House*, pages 72–74.

#### C-13 Beginning the *Sukkah* after Yom Kippur

Immediately after *Havdalah*, it is customary to make a symbolic start on the *Sukkah*, i.e., by putting up one board or driving one nail.<sup>127</sup> In this manner one concludes the Ten Days of Repentance and turns at once to the performance of a *mitzvah*.

#### C-14 Breaking the fast

The meal following Yom Kippur should be a particularly joyous one. There is a feeling of exhilaration and relief which comes from having experienced a day of introspection and prayer in addition to a sense of Divine forgiveness. "Go your way, and eat your food with joy, and drink your wine, for God has already accepted your deeds."<sup>128</sup> It is especially appropriate to seek out those in the synagogue who are alone and invite them to join in breaking the fast.