

JEWISH NEW YEAR, 5736, STARTS AT SUNDOWN TONITE, FRIDAY

The Las Vegas Jewish community at sundown Friday will join Jews throughout the world to celebrate Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

According to the Hebrew calendar, this is the start of the year 5736.

The period from the beginning of Rosh Hashanah until the end of Yom Kippur, which is the holiest of all Jewish days, marks the Ten Days of Repentance. At the first call of the shofar (ram's horn) man's deeds over the past year are reviewed. The days of meditation following Rosh Hashanah are designed for him to prove his worth. The shofar sounds again at the end of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, marking the end of the holy season.

Local Jewish residents will observe the holidays in traditional fashion at Temple Beth Shalom, 1600 E. Oakey Boulevard. Services will be held at 8:00 P.M. Friday, Saturday and Sunday at 8:30 A.M. and Saturday evening at 8:00 P.M.

A special feature of the Holiday will be the Temple's Junior Choir participating in the Services on Sunday, the Second Day of Rosh Hashanah.

Rabbi Philip Shnairson will conduct and officiate at all services. He will also deliver special sermons appropriate to the Holidays.

Cantor Joseph Kohn will chant the liturgy, assisted by the Temple Adult Choir, with Anthony Thomas and Morry King conducting. Martha Olson will be at the organ.

ROSH HA SHANAH FEATURE

IN HONOR OF ROSH HASHANA, JEWISH NEW YEAR OF 5736, THE LAS VEGAS ISRAELITE WILL PUBLISH A SERIES OF STORIES TO COMMEMORATE THE HOLIDAY WHICH FALLS ON THE FIRST TWO DAYS OF THE MONTH OF TISHRI, EVE OF FRI., SEPT. 5 TO SUNDOWN SUN., SEPT. 7. ROSH HASHANA MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE 10 DAYS OF REPENTANCE, AWE-INSPIRING, DAYS CULMINATING AT YOM KIPPUR, ON EVE OF SUN., SEPT. 14 UNTIL SUNDOWN MON., SEPT. 15.

Inside Judaica. Questions of Jewish Interest

By Dr. Frederick Lachman
Exec. Ed. Encyclopaedia Judaica

A. Avodah, the Hebrew word meaning "service" is the name for Temple ritual, applied to the central part of the Musaf liturgy on the Day of Atonement, celebrated this year on September 15. It poetically recounts the sacrificial ritual in the Temple on the Day of Atonement. The ritual, based on Leviticus 16, is described in detail in the Mishnah and in a talmudic tractate.

After the destruction of the Second Temple, says the authoritative Encyclopaedia Judaica, the description of this ancient ritual became the core of the Musaf service on the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was the only occasion during the year when the high priest entered the Holy of the Holies in the Temple and he had to make special preparations for the ritual.

Seven days prior to the Day of Atonement, the high priest was moved to a special apartment in the Temple court where he studied with the elders every detail of the sacrificial cult for the Day of Atonement. A deputy priest was appointed to take the place of the high priest should he be prevented by defilement or death from performing his duties.

The day before the Day of Atonement, the high priest was escorted by the elders to his chamber in the Temple compound where he joined the other priests. The elders earnestly entreated him to perform all the minutiae of the sacrificial cult carefully as interpreted by the Pharisaic school, and took leave of him. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest, the E/J continues, himself performed the offering of the daily sacrifice, the incense offering, and the other sacred duties. After a series of immersions and ablutions he offered a bull as his personal sin-offering. He confessed his own and his family's sins, the sins of the tribe of Aaron (the priests), and those of all Israel (Lev 16:6). Every time he uttered the holy name of God, which was uttered only on the Day of Atonement, the people prostrated themselves and responded: "Blessed be His Name whose glorious kingdom is forever and ever". During the service of the high priest, this procedure was repeated ten times or, according to another source, 13 times.

The high priest then drew two lots from a wooden box, one inscribed "For Azazel" and the other "A sin-offering for the Lord." The role of each of two he-goats participating in the ritual was determined by the lots. The high priest sent the goat "For Azazel" into the desert and he offered the other as a sin-offering. After a special incense-offering in the Holy of the Holies, the high priest recited a prayer that the climate in the coming year be moderate, neither too hot nor too wet; that the sovereignty of Judah be preserved; that Israel be prosperous; and that no earthquake harm the inhabitants of the Sharon Plain.

This traditional, and to some extent idealized, account of the ceremony, says the Judaica, served as the base for the subsequent development of the Musaf liturgy of the Day of Atonement. Originally, the Avodah was of a simple nature, being an unadorned description of the Temple service following the Mishnah Yoma. The main section was composed, at latest, in the fourth century, C.E., but was enriched in the Middle Ages by elaborate chants, most of them of an acrostic pattern.

REFORM TEMPLE HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES IN CONVENTION CENTER GOLD ROOM



DR. DAVE WASSERMAN, LEFT, VICE PRESIDENT OF CONGREGATION NER TAMID; RABBI STEPHEN E. WEISBERG, HOLDING A TRADITIONAL MID-EASTERN RAM'S HORN; AND DR. GENE KIRSHBAUM, PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATION, HOLDING A CENTURY-OLD TORAH SCROLL RESCUED FROM THE HOLOCAUST, FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II, (PHOTO BY JAY FLORIAN MITCHELL.)

Jews throughout the world and locally will celebrate the High Holydays, beginning Friday night, September 5, with ROSH HASHANAH, the New Year; and culminating with YOM KIPPUR, September 14, Sunday night, and September 15, Monday. Locally, Congregation NER TAMID -- the Reform Synagogue of Las Vegas -- will conduct High Holyday Services once again, as it did last year, in the Las Vegas Convention Center, in the Gold Room.

Visitors and non-

affiliated members of the community are welcome to obtain High Holyday tickets by contributing to the Congregation Ner Tamid Religious School Fund. Services at the liberal Synagogue will be conducted by Rabbi Stephen E. Weisberg and Cantor Elliot Talenfeld. The High Holydays usher in a 10-day period of introspection and self-scrutiny, in which Jews examine their lives and actions and vow to return to God's teachings.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



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