



Each issue of the newspaper will feature an article written by one of the 3 Rabbis active in the Charlotte community: Rabbi James M. Bennett-Temple Beth El; Rabbi Murray Ezring-Temple Israel; Rabbi Yoseph Groner-Lubavitch of NC.

Point of View

Rosh Hashanah — A Spiritual Odyssey

By: Rabbi Yossi Groner

Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of a new year on the Jewish calendar. The way we celebrate the new year reflects our attitude towards this holiday in particular and our religion in general.

The first ten days of the year, which culminate with Yom Kippur, are often referred to as "Days of Awe". Indeed, Judaism, as a whole, treats these days in a solemn and revered manner.

Why indeed is Rosh Hashanah so important to us and why do we hold it in such awe and reverence?

Let us first examine the meaning of Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is translated loosely as the new year or the beginning of the year. The literal translation of the two words Rosh Hashanah is *Head of the year*. The head is significantly more important than a beginning. The head leads and guides the entire body. Although the head is very much a part of the body and needs the body, it stands apart from the body. This is also true when a group or an association is formed. Although the head is part of the group or association, it stands above the rest in responsibility and leadership.

This concept is applied to Rosh Hashanah as well. Rosh Hashanah

is part of the year, yet it guides the year in a particular direction. According to Kabbalah, the days of Rosh Hashanah include within them, at least in capsule form, all the days of the year. This is why, on Rosh Hashanah, all of creation is judged. It also explains why we pray and ask G-d to grant us a good and healthy year.

There is a story told of three Rabbis who met after services on Rosh Hashanah. Their discussion turned to their particular experience and quest during services.

The first Rabbi said, "On Rosh Hashanah, one needs to ask G-d for his blessings of health, wealth and prosperity. I utilized every moment of the service, asking G-d for his blessings."

The second Rabbi said, "Rosh Hashanah is a time of spiritual reckoning. I asked G-d for his blessings in Torah study. I asked for success in teaching and feeling positive about my Judaism."

The third Rabbi said, "On Rosh Hashanah, we need to connect to G-d and reach a higher level of Divine awareness. By connecting with G-d intellectually and spiritually, we will come to see

G-dliness in all of creation. We

will understand that every aspect of life is a reflection of G-d."

In truth, all three Rabbis were correct depending on what spiritual level one wants to attain on Rosh Hashanah. If all one wants is a blessing for materialism or even if he quests the spiritual experience, Rosh Hashanah is the time to ask for it.

However, if one desires the highest level of connection, he then reaches for the third level, which is the ultimate experience of Rosh Hashanah. This requires total submission to G-d which leads to a deep level of unity with G-d in a most wondrous way.

Adam was the first human. He proclaimed G-d's presence throughout the universe. He encouraged all of life, including the animal kingdom to kneel and bow before G-d, thus bringing the world to recognize G-d. Through this act of recognition and submission, he was able to make an everlasting connection with G-d.

We, too, can utilize the precious days of Rosh Hashanah in elevating ourselves from mundane matters and making that spiritual connection which would bring us to experience the full impact of the days of awe.

Chavurat Tikvah: Jewish Education and Community Life

By Deborah S. Bosley

On May 27, 1995 Chavurat Tikvah picnicked in Freedom Park to celebrate the end of its Sunday School's first year. Since October, 1994 six children (ages 4-8) have had Sunday School every week in members' homes. Nina Harris taught Hannah Settle, Talia Saxe, Jonathon Woollen, Nicki Bogard, Paul Chelms, and Rachel Offerdahl Hebrew and Jewish holidays, customs, and rituals through song, art, stories, and adventure. Two more children are enrolled for 1995-1996. Robin Hoff, formerly a teacher in the Jewish Preschool, will be the new Sunday School teacher. Phyllis Woollen stated that her son Jonathon "is very excited about going to Sunday School because the children have developed a special bond." Marty Settle states, "One of the joys of our time together is

Chavurat Tikvah begins its seventh year. Many of the 60 members belong to Temple Israel or Temple Beth El or are active at the Jewish Community Center, but they have in common their desire for more intimate gatherings to celebrate and learn more about Jewish life: its intellectual, aesthetic, ethical, and religious rituals and customs. Ellen Chelms, co-"Rosh" stated "One of the strengths of this Chavurat is how participatory every aspect is: For every activity or religious ceremony, we design it, research it, execute it, decorate it, and cater it."

Members also come to Chavurat Tikvah seeking consolation and emotional support. A minyan has gathered every Tuesday evening, and the women meet once a month for Rosh Chodesh as a means of celebrating the female aspects of Judaism. Members also take care of one another: Ellen Myers and Debbie Langsam head a Chicken Soup committee that helps members during times of crisis. Chavurat Tikvah also celebrates bris, weddings, baby-namings, and is currently looking forward to its first bar mitzvah—Sammie Myers—later next year.

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services are the religious backbone of the Chavurat. Allen Saxe and Charlie Brown, who provide much of the religious structure for the Chavurat, currently are designing the Holiday services as Ellen Myers and Jessica Saxe meet with members to divide up the service. "We create holiday services in which we can all participate," indicated Harry Chernotsky, one of the founders, for everyone who wishes



Marty Settle at "Woodschtick '95

watching the kids from toddlers to teenagers, playing and praying together."



Gathering at home of Rene' Gorelick

Despite this emphasis on educating its children, Chavurat members come from a variety of lifestyles. Not all members have young children; some are single, older, part of an interfaith couple, partnered, or are married with no children. This inclusiveness characterizes most Chavurot. "The only requirement for joining Chavurat Tikvah," says Sam Eneman, current co-"Rosh," "is the desire to celebrate the community of Judaism."

Community: this is what Chavurat Tikvah celebrates. A Chavurah (from the word "Chaver"—friend and community) is a group of people who meet regularly to share their Jewish heritage. "Tikvah" means "hope"—faith in the power of community.

to have a part in the service, including the children.

"These services give us a sense of ourselves as a religious community; our programs create our intellectual and religious community and our children remind us of our future," stated Myers. This year, as in years past, the Chavurat will conduct Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services at the Unitarian Church.

Anyone who would like to be on the mailing list or wishes to learn more about this Chavurah and its activities may contact Gwen Offerdahl, membership chair, 366-3590 or Ellen Chelms at 332-9300.

Dr. Deborah S. Bosley is associate professor of English at UNC-Charlotte and a member of Chavurat Tikvah.

**Wishing Everyone
A Happy, Healthy
L'Shana Tova**

Commissioner Lloyd Scher



*Announcing
a
Birth*

Cheryl and Michael Rabinowitz of Long Island, NY, proudly announce the birth of their daughter, Paige Erica, on May 10, 1995. The proud grandparents are Helene and Marty Jankowitz of Charlotte and Delores and Ted Rabinowitz of DelRay Beach, Florida.

Due to a lack of volunteers and active participation, the B'nai B'rith Women's 1995-96 Community Calendar will not be printed this year. We hope to be able to publish it again in the future if circumstances permit.

Thank you for your support of this project in past years.
Avodah Council
B'nai B'rith Women

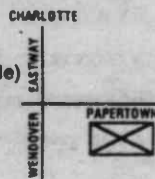
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New Year**

**Bob & Anne
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