

**GEULAS YISRAEL****RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN****RAM YESHIVAT HAR ETZION****MAGGID SHIUR ALL PARSHA AND ALL DAF, OU.ORG****ROSH HASHANA**

# Rosh Hashana: Malchut Revealed

The Yomim Noraim summon us into a courtroom not of this world. Every human being appears before the Kisei Hakavod—Heavenly Throne—like sheep passing in a single file. Each person is measured by the choices he has made. The fate of individuals and the course of nations are weighed and determined. It is a day of solemnity, heavy with destiny.

On these days of awe and radiance, we gather before God, pleading for mercy while also evoking the sweet echoes of Jewish history. Our prayers and imagination carry us back to the mountain of the Akeidah, where Avraham stood ready to offer his beloved son upon the altar of love for Hashem. Beyond the Akeidah, we recall the heroism of Jews across the centuries, who gave their lives to uphold faith and the presence of Hashem. These are days of power and of glory.

## ROSH HASHANAH UNSEENS

And yet the Torah conceals this drama. It records a chag on the first day of Tishrei but does not reveal the full weight or backstory of the day. The only hint of fate and judgment is the word *Zikaron*—a day of memory, of Hashem recalling our deeds and performance, and of our turning to Him, asking Him to remember our loyalty and sacrifices. The identity of Rosh Hashanah is hidden.

Chazal sensed that Rosh Hashana hides from

view. The pasuk in Tehillim (81:4-5), which serves as the anthem of Rosh Hashana, hints at concealment:

תִּקְעוּ בַחֲדָשׁ שׁוֹפָר בְּכֶסֶה לְיוֹם חֲגִנּוּ כִּי חֶק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל  
הוּא מִשְׁפָּט לְאַלְקֵי יַעֲקֹב

“Blow the horn at the new moon, at the full moon, on our festival day; for this is a statute for Israel, a judgment of the God of Ya’akov.”

This pasuk, centered on the call of the shofar, designates the day as *keseh*. The unusual term suggests layered interpretation. Chazal uncover one dimension of its meaning: it alludes to concealment, hinting that some essential aspect of this day remains hidden—*mechuseh* (מכוסה).

As the Gemara explains:

“איזה חג שהחדש מתכסה בו הוא אמר זה ראש  
השנה” (Rosh Hashanah 16a)

“What is the festival during which the new moon is covered? This is Rosh Hashana.”

According to the Gemara, the term *keseh*—“covered”—points to the hidden nature of this day. Specifically, the Gemara addresses the concealment of Rosh Chodesh by Rosh Hashana. Though the first of Tishrei is Rosh Chodesh, like the other eleven months, its character is eclipsed by Rosh Hashana. The Rosh Chodesh korbanot are not offered, and Hallel is not recited. Calendarically, it is the first day of the month, yet Rosh Chodesh is overshadowed.

This particular concealment of Rosh Chodesh



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# Jewish Life at Hebrew University

The tremendous sense of excitement, along with the weight of responsibility is a small depiction of the lofty day of Rosh Hashana. Rosh Hashana is the day we shake and shiver as we pray in the Beit Knesset, hear the Shofar and present to Hashem our personal development plan for the year.

Yet, we walk home in our finest Yom Tov garb, sit down to a beautiful and joyous meal with our family, and celebrate with full confidence that Hashem will grant us a year of life to fulfill our destiny. This is the beautiful balance of Rosh Hashana, the *אבינו מלכנו*, where we know, just as a father pushes his child to work hard and develop, he will also be there to ensure success!



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hints at the deeper “hidden” dimensions of the day. The “astronomical” dynamic—whereby the Rosh Chodesh elements are veiled by Rosh Hashana—reflects larger “concealments.”

## CONCEALED ORIGINS

Rosh Hashana is a veil. The Torah withholds its identity as Yom Hadin, and in turn, Rosh Hashana shrouds Rosh Chodesh. Even part of its own history remains concealed. This day is more than judgment—it commemorates the creation of the world, culminating on the sixth day with the creation of Man.

The entire process of Ma’aseh Bereishit remains beyond human comprehension. We possess no details of how Hashem brought the world into being; Sefer Bereshit conceals far more than it discloses. The Torah offers only a rough outline of the six days of creation, which reached their culmination on Rosh Hashana.

By contrast, the events that followed

creation—human history—are described with striking clarity. The Chagim commemorate decisive moments of Hashem’s intervention in the world. We know precisely what transpired in Mitzrayim, when we were freed from bondage. We recall in detail the desert journey, guided mercifully by Hashem across scorching sands. We remember how He revealed the Torah atop a mountain billowing in smoke.

Historical events marked by the Chagim are carefully recorded and transparent. Yet the story of Rosh Hashana, the creation of the universe, remains beyond human grasp—concealed in its full, awe-inspiring majesty. Rosh Hashana is wholly a day of *keseh*, of hiddenness. Its very identity is concealed within the Torah. The details of creation, culminating on Rosh Hashana, elude human understanding. Even the experience of Rosh Chodesh passes almost unnoticed. In every sense, Rosh Hashana

is a day of concealment—hidden, obscured, and in no way obvious (for development of this theme see *Pachad Yitzchak* to Rosh Hashana, chapter 1).

### THE VEIL LIFTED

Rosh Hashana is centered upon the ultimate hiddenness—Hashem’s authority. Throughout the year, His sovereignty remains concealed; Rosh Hashana seeks to make that hidden Malchut visible. On this day, every person and nation, whether knowingly or unknowingly, submits to Malchut Shamayim. Judgment does more than reveal Hashem’s hidden authority—it renders it concrete, unmistakable, and inescapable.

During the rest of the year, human beings may choose to defy His will and reject His sovereignty. On Rosh Hashana, however, Hashem’s authority, usually concealed, becomes palpable. Involuntarily, every person submits to Malchut Shamayim. Through judgment, each individual implicitly affirms Divine rule. Rosh Hashana takes what is ordinarily hidden and makes it unmistakably present.

This hiddenness did not exist at the dawn of creation; then, Hashem’s authority was clear, absolute, and radiated through the world. During the first Rosh Hashana in history, His authority was uncontested. The world was pure and immaculate, in its original state, and Man

had yet to disobey. The world radiated with Malchut Hashem. On that Rosh Hashana, we recall these original moments by reciting several pesukim that evoke this primordial reality, when Divine sovereignty was absolute and unchallenged.

Since then, Hashem’s Malchut has become concealed. Humanity disobeys Him, strays from His will, and obscures His sovereignty. Yet in the future, when history reaches its end, Divine authority will once again be overt and unmistakable. We yearn for that ultimate redemption, when, as in the beginning, His rule will shine clearly and uncontested:

“הופע בהדר גאון עזק על כל יושבי תבל ארצך”

Rosh Hashana is the singular day in the year when Hashem’s Malchut shines forth. On this day, we yearn for the unchallenged sovereignty of Hashem—a sovereignty that blazed with clarity at the very first Rosh Hashana of creation and is destined to blaze once again when the world is restored. On Rosh Hashana, we yearn for “disclosure,” for what is hidden to emerge and shine in plain sight. ■



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