

FALL 2009

HOLIDAY	DATES	OBSERVANCE
ROSH HASHANAH: <i>(literally, "Head of the Year") refers to the celebration of the Jewish New Year.</i>	<u>Holy Days:</u> sundown, Friday, September 18 – sundown, Sunday, September 20 <i>Synagogue attendance, no writing or working on this holiday</i>	<i>The holiday is observed on the first day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei, & marks the beginning of a ten-day period of prayer, self-examination & repentance, which culminate on the fast day of Yom Kippur</i>
YOM KIPPUR: <i>"Day of Atonement" and refers to the annual Jewish observance of fasting, prayer and repentance. This is considered to be the holiest day in the Jewish calendar.</i>	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Sunday, September 27 – sundown, Monday, September 28 <i>Synagogue attendance, no writing or working on this holiday, observance includes fasting from sundown to sundown</i>	<i>Fasting is seen as fulfilling this biblical commandment. The Yom Kippur fast also enables us to put aside our physical desires and to concentrate on our spiritual needs through prayer, repentance and self-improvement. It is customary in the days before Yom Kippur for Jews to seek out friends and family whom they have wronged and personally ask for their forgiveness.</i>
SUKKOT: <i>a Hebrew word meaning "booths" or "huts", refers to the Jewish festival of giving thanks for the fall harvest, as well as the commemoration of the forty years of Jewish wandering in the desert after Sinai.</i>	<u>Holy Days:</u> Sundown, Friday, October 2 – sundown, Sunday, October 4 <i>holiday continues until sundown, October 9 Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday</i>	<i>Sukkot is celebrated five days after Yom Kippur on the 15th of Tishrei, and is marked by several distinct traditions. One tradition, which takes the commandment to "dwell in booths" literally, is to build a sukkah, a booth or hut. A sukkah is often erected by Jews during this festival, and it is common practice for some to eat and even live in these temporary dwellings during Sukkot.</i>
SHEMINI ATZERET: <i>falls immediately after the holiday of Sukkot. Although its name implies that it is part of Sukkot ("Shemini" means eighth, hence implying that the holiday is the eighth day of Sukkot), Shemini Atzeret is actually considered a separate holiday.</i>	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Friday, October 9 – sundown, Saturday, October 10 <i>Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday</i>	<i>Rabbinic tradition teaches that on Shemini Atzeret the world is judged for water, or rainfall, in the upcoming year. In an agricultural society it was a very important day. Water continues to be a chief concern of ours, especially in Israel, where the water supply is dangerously low. Israel is among the world's nations listed as experiencing water scarcity. On Shemini Atzeret we recite special prayers asking for rain.</i>
SIMCHAT TORAH: <i>Hebrew for "rejoicing in the Law", celebrates the completion of the annual reading of the Torah. Simchat Torah is a joyous festival, in which we affirm our view of the Torah as a tree of life and demonstrate a living example of never-ending, lifelong study.</i>	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Saturday, October 10 – sundown, Sunday, October 11 <i>Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday</i>	<i>Torah scrolls are taken from the ark and carried or danced around the synagogue seven times. During the Torah service, the concluding section of Deuteronomy is read, and immediately following, the opening section of Genesis, or B'reishit as it is called in Hebrew, is read.</i>
CHANUKAH: <i>meaning "dedication" in Hebrew, refers to the joyous eight-day celebration during which Jews commemorate the victory of the Macabees over the armies of Syria in 165 B.C.E. and the subsequent liberation and "rededication" of the Temple in Jerusalem.</i>	Sundown, Friday, December 11 – sundown, Saturday, December 19 <i>last candle menorah candle Friday, December 18</i>	<i>The modern home celebration of Chanukah centers around the lighting of the chanukiah, a special menorah for Chanukah; unique foods, latkes and jelly doughnuts; and special songs and games.</i>

SPRING 2010

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TU B'SHEVAT: "New Year of the Trees" is Jewish Arbor Day.	sundown, Friday, January 29 – sundown, Saturday, January 30	The holiday is observed on the fifteenth (tu) of Shevat. Scholars believe that Tu B'Shevat was originally an agricultural festival, marking the emergence of spring. After the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.C.E. this holiday was a way for Jews to symbolically bind themselves to their former homeland by eating foods that could be found in Israel. Today, Tu B'Shevat has also become a tree planting festival in Israel, in which both Israelis and Jews around the world plant trees in honor or in memory of a loved one or friend.
PURIM: celebrated by the reading of the Scroll of Esther, known in Hebrew as the Megillat Esther, which relates the basic story of Purim.	sundown, Saturday, February 27 – sundown, Sunday, February 28	Purim is an unusual holiday in many respects. First, Esther is the only Book of the Bible in which G-d is not mentioned. Second, Purim, like Chanukah, is viewed by tradition as a minor festival. The elevation of Purim to a major holiday was a result of the Jewish historical experience. Over the centuries, Haman became the embodiment of every anti-Semite in every land where Jews were oppressed. The significance in Purim lies not so much in how it began, but in what it has become—a thankful and joyous affirmation of Jewish survival against all odds.
PASSOVER: is a major Jewish spring festival, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt over 3,000 years ago.	sundown, Monday, March 29 – sundown, Tuesday, April 6 <u>Holy days:</u> starts at sundown the day before date listed Tuesday, March 30 (1st day passover) Wednesday, March 31 (2nd day passover) Monday, April 5 (7th day passover) Tuesday, April 6 (8th day passover) possible travel and attendance of Passover seder on the evenings of 3/29 & 3/30 and synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday	1st seder: Wednesday, April 8 2nd seder: Thursday, April 9 The ritual observance of this holiday centers around a special home service called the seder (meaning "order") and a festive meal; the prohibition of chametz (leaven); and the eating of matzah (an unleavened bread). On the eve of the fifteenth day of Nisan in the Hebrew calendar, we read from a book called the hagaddah, meaning "telling," which contains the order of prayers, rituals, readings and songs for the Passover seder. The Passover seder is the only ritual meal in the Jewish calendar year for which such an order is prescribed, hence its name.
YOM HASHOAH: also known as Holocaust Remembrance Day, occurs on the 27th of Nisan.	Sundown, Saturday, April 10 – sundown, Sunday, April 11 Observed: Monday, April 12 When the actual date of Yom Hashoah falls on a Friday, the state of Israel observes Yom Hashoah on the preceding Thursday. When it falls on a Sunday, Yom Hashoah is observed on the following Monday.	Shoah, which means catastrophe or utter destruction in Hebrew, refers to the atrocities that were committed against the Jewish people during World War II. This is a memorial day for those who died in the Shoah.
YOM HAZIKARON: On this Memorial Day, the fourth of Iyar in the Hebrew calendar, we commemorate the soldiers who have fallen fighting for Israel's independence and defending its security.	Sundown, Sunday, April 18 – sundown, Monday, April 19	Yom Hazikaron is marked with sirens that alert people to stop all activity and honor the fallen. This holiday's placement the day before Israel Independence Day (Iyar 5) is intentional: the soldiers who give their lives were directly responsible for the existence of Israel as an independent state. In this way, a day of solemn commemoration can be followed by joyous celebration and song.

SPRING 2010 CONTINUED

HOLIDAY	DATES	OBSERVANCE
YOM HA'ATZMAUT: <i>Israeli Independence Day, marks the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948.</i>	Sundown, Monday, April 19 – sundown, Tuesday, April 20	<i>It is observed on the 5th of Iyar in the Hebrew calendar. Israel Independence Day celebrates the state of Israel's establishment on May 14, 1948. Jewish communities around the world celebrate Yom Haatzma'ut with festivals of food, music, and dancing.</i>
LAG B'OMER: <i>is the shorthand way of saying the thirty-third day of the omer.</i>	Sundown, Saturday, May 1 – sundown, Sunday, May 2	<i>It is celebrated to commemorate the day a plague ended in which thousands of students of Rabbi Akiba, a Talmudic scholar, died during the Counting of the Omer. The period of counting is traditionally observed as a period of mourning. The mourning, however, is set aside on Lag Ba'Omer, making it day of special joy and festivity.</i>
YOM YERUSHALAYIM: <i>Jerusalem Day; this day; commemorates the re-unification of Jerusalem in 1967.</i>	Sundown, Tuesday, May 11 – sundown, Wednesday, May 12	<i>Celebratory customs outside of Israel include dancing, and learning about Jerusalem's history; Israeli schools devote the week preceding this day to enhancing students' knowledge and understanding of the city's significance.</i>
SHAVUOT: <i>has several names: Chag HaShavuot (the Festival of Weeks); Chag HaKatzir (the Festival of the Harvest); Yom HaBikurim (the Day of First Fruits); and Chag Mattan Torah (the Holiday of the Giving of the Torah)</i>	<u>Holy Days:</u> Sundown, Tuesday, May 18 – sundown, Thursday, May 20 <i>Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday</i>	<i>Shavuot is a Hebrew word meaning "weeks" and refers to the Jewish festival marking the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Shavuot, like so many other Jewish holidays began as an ancient agricultural festival, marking the end of the spring barley harvest and the beginning of the summer wheat harvest. Special customs on Shavuot are the reading of the Book of Ruth, which reminds us that we too can find a continual source of blessing in our tradition.</i> <i>Traditionally, dairy dishes are served on this holiday to symbolize the sweetness of the Torah, as well as the "land of milk and honey".</i>

JUST DATES, NO NARRATIVE

HOLIDAY	DATES
Rosh Hashanah	<u>Holy Days:</u> sundown, Friday, September 18 - sundown, Sunday, September 20 (Synagogue attendance, no writing or working on this holiday)
Yom Kippur	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Sunday, September 27 – sundown, Monday, September 28 (Synagogue attendance, no writing or working on this holiday, observance includes fasting from sundown to sundown) considered one of, if not the, holiest day of the Jewish year
Sukkot	<u>Holy Days:</u> Sundown, Friday, October 2 –sundown, Sunday, October 4 holiday continues until sundown, Friday, October 9 (Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday)
Shemini Atzeret	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Friday, October 9 – sundown, Saturday, October 10 (Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday)
Simchat Torah	<u>Holy Day:</u> sundown, Saturday, 10 – sundown, Sunday, October 11 (Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday)
Chanukah	sundown, Friday, December 11 – sundown, Saturday, December 19 last candle is lit Friday, December 18
Tu B'Shevat	sundown, Friday, January 29 – sundown, Saturday, January 30
Purim	sundown, Saturday, February 27 – sundown, Sunday, February 28
Passover	sundown, Monday, March 29 – sundown, Tuesday, April 6 <u>Holy days:</u> starts at sundown the day before date listed Tuesday, March 30 (1st day passover) Monday, April 5 (7th day passover) Wednesday, March 31 (2nd day passover) Tuesday, April 6 (8th day passover) (possible travel and attendance of Passover seder on the evenings of 3/29 & 3/30 and synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday)
Yom Hashoah	Sundown, Saturday, April 10 – sundown, Sunday, April 11 Observed: Monday, April 12
Yom HaZikaron	Sundown, Sunday, April 18 – sundown, Monday, April 19
Yom Ha'Atzmaut	Sundown, Monday, April 19 – sundown, Tuesday, April 20
Lag B'Omer	Sundown, Saturday, May 1 – sundown, Sunday, May 2
Yom Yerushalayim	Sundown, Tuesday, May 11 – sundown, Wednesday, May 12
Shavuot	<u>Holy Days:</u> Sundown, Tuesday, May 18 – sundown, Thursday, May 20 (Synagogue attendance for holy days, no writing or working on this holiday)