

New Names in the

Book of Life:

Mildred Abraham

Daisy Storch

Gertrude Levine

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Holy day greetings in Yeshua!

Rosh Ha Shanah is here again!

How swiftly the years pass! Once again we are approaching the Feast of Trumpets (Yom Teruah) also known as Rosh Ha Shanah (the head of the year). The name Rosh Ha Shanah as it is used in the Bible (Ezekiel 40:1) simply means the beginning of the year, and does not actually designate the festival. However, traditional rabbinic thinking connected the idea of a new year with Yom Teruah the biblical festival that falls on the first day of the seventh month (Leviticus 23:24). For this reason, Jewish people celebrate a new year in the fall, in the seventh or holiest month of the Jewish year. (The actual **Biblical new year**, as mentioned in Exodus chapter 12, falls in the spring at Passover time in the month of Nisan.)

Rosh Ha Shanah Customs

On the first night of Rosh Ha Shanah it is customary to greet one's friends with: "May you be inscribed for a good year," in Hebrew, "*L'Shanah tova tikatevu.*" Inscribed in what? THE BOOK OF LIFE.

It is traditionally believed that three books are opened on Rosh Ha Shanah, one for the completely righteous, one for the completely wicked, and one for the average person. Jews who accept this concept believe that the completely righteous are inscribed in the Book of Life. The completely wicked are immediately inscribed in the Book of Death. The average person is kept in suspense from Rosh Ha Shanah until the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). His fate is determined on Yom Kippur. If he has been found deserving, he is inscribed in the Book of Life. If not, he is inscribed in the Book of Death.

Can the righteous be sure?

There is a story in the Talmud (Berachot 286) of a very famous and influential rabbi, Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai, who played a major role in restructuring Judaism. He was the head of the first rabbinic academy which was established in Yavneh, Israel after the Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. Ben Zakkai was famous for his mastery of both the written and oral Law. When asked, "Now that there are no sacrifices, how can we seek atonement?" Yochanan Ben Zakkai replied that good deeds would atone as sacrifices once did. (This is the origin of this commonly held Jewish belief today!)

The man who revised what the **Torah** had said about atonement in Leviticus 17:11: "*for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul,*" made a very telling and tearful confession to his disciples as he neared death. These are the words of Ben Zakkai as recorded in numerous traditional Jewish books:

"Were I to be brought before a mortal king, who is here today but in the grave tomorrow, who may become angry with me, but whose anger is not everlasting, who may

imprison me, but whose imprisonment is not forever, who may kill me, but who can kill only for this world, and who may be bribed, even then would I fear!

But now I am led before the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who lives through all eternity (should I not tremble before this awesome judgment?). If he is angry with me, it is imprisonment forever. If he kills someone, that person is dead forever; and I can neither appease him with words, nor bribe him with money.

Moreover there are two paths for me: one leading to paradise and one leading to hell. I know not through which I am to be led. Should I not weep?"

We can be sure!

We don't have to weep! The Bible lets us know that we can reach the end of our life with the assurance that our name is written in the Book of Life. The first thing that we must understand is that **no** name is written in God's Book because of the good deeds (mitzvot) that a person has done in his or her lifetime. It is the mercy and undeserved favor (grace) of God that enables our names to appear in the Book of Life. "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us....*" (Titus 3:5) We are told in the Tenach that all our righteousness is like filthy rags: "*But we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousness are as filthy rags....*" (Isaiah 64:6)

The prophet Malachi calls God's Book a book of remembrance: "*And a book of remembrance was written before him for those who fear the Lord and who esteem His name and they will be Mine says the Lord of hosts.*" (Malachi 3:16, 17) Those whose names are found in the Book of Life **fear the Lord and esteem His Name**. Reverential fear of God is the beginning of wisdom and salvation.

Sin keeps names out of the Book of Life. The Lord said to Moses "*Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.*" (Exodus 32:33) Who sins? Everyone! Each year on Yom Kippur, Jews throughout the world recite the "Al Chet" prayer, containing a long list of sins common to all mankind. These include sins of speech, sins of hardening of the heart, sins of unchastity, secret sins, sins of wronging our neighbor, sinful meditating of the heart, association with iniquity, and despising parents and teachers. Our people make the following general confession: "We have been rebellious, we have acted perversely, we have transgressed, oppressed, and been stiff-necked; we have done wickedly, we have corrupted ourselves and committed abomination. We have gone astray, and we have led astray."

Who can argue with what the Bible says in Ecclesiastes 7:20: "*For there is not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.*"?

Does God have a solution to the sin problem! Yes _ Messiah is His solution. The Book of Life is actually named after Him. We find this out at the very end of the Bible, in the Book of

Revelation where the Book is called "*the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*" (Revelation 13:8)

**Book
of
Life**

Yeshua, Jesus, the Lamb of God, came to earth to be the atonement for all sin. It is through His blood that eternal atonement has been made, once for all time. Upon receiving Him and His death as the payment for our sin, we receive the gift of eternal life (John 3:36). Our names are written in **His Book**, the "Lamb's Book of Life." We pass from death to life. We have the assurance that when this life is over, we will spend a glorious eternity with our God. We do not weep with uncertainty. Instead, we shout for joy!

Is your name in the "Book of Life"?

It needs to be, and this can be the year that it happens! Fear God, not man, esteem the name of the Lord (Yeshua is His name!), and receive **by faith** God's gift. No one is good enough to merit Heaven by their works, in spite of what modern Jewish thought may postulate. The Bible clearly tells us that God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts. (Isaiah 55:8) Even the faith to believe in Yeshua, is a gift from God: "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast.*" (Ephesians 2:8-9)

When the Ruach HaKodesh draws someone to Yeshua, God gives that person the faith to believe. Some of you have that faith right now! This can be the most joy-filled High Holy Day Season of your life. To receive Yeshua as your Messiah pray with us right where you are:

"God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I want my name to be inscribed in the Book of Life. Thank you for revealing to me that it is the Lamb's Book of Life and that Yeshua is The Lamb, Your Son and the One who made atonement for my sin. I receive Him today as my Messiah and Savior. Forgive me for all my sin. Cleanse me, make me whole. Please help me to understand the Bible, and have the power to live a life pleasing to You." In Yeshua's Name, Amen

If you prayed that prayer and meant it with all your heart,

your name is now written in the Book of Life **forever**.

Write and tell us of your decision. We'll help you get started in your new life in the Messiah.

Rosh Ha Shanah Offers

Do you have a Jewish calendar for the new year beginning Sept. 2000? You can order one from us using the enclosed card. Our calendar includes the traditional readings from the Bible for each Sabbath throughout the year, the dates of the various Feasts of the Lord, as well as a daily reminder to pray for the Lash family and the ministry of Jewish Jewels. You'll enjoy the full color illustrations and descriptions of Judaica pictured on the calendar. Order one for a Jewish friend. (Messianic prophecies are on the back.)

We have put together a package of **the best** materials to share your faith with a Jewish person. It includes a copy of **the good news according to Matthew, I Have a Friend Who's Jewish**, and a "L'CHAIM" tract. Order a set as a holiday gift for that special Jewish person in your life. (We've also included a Bible bookmark for you. It contains a "Scriptural Prayer For The Salvation Of God's Chosen People" to help you pray that someone into the Kingdom.)

May God's richest blessings be yours during the High Holy Days, and throughout eternity.

P.S. We are praising the Lord for a precious Jewish couple, Alan & Rhonda who prayed with us to receive Yeshua on July 15 at Congregation Beth Am Messiah in New City, New York. We are also praising the Lord for Neil's brother Al, who recently accepted Yeshua and is growing daily in his knowledge of the Messiah as are the three precious Jewish ladies whose names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life as Jamie prayed with them on Aug. 5, 2000 (see photo).

