

# תשע"ב JEWISH CALENDAR 2011-2012

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## FEBRUARY 2012 - SHEVAT/ADAR 5772 שבט–אדר תשע"ב

#### SHEVAT 10

Yartzeit of Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, sixth leader of Chabad-Lubavitch (1950). Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak fought to preserve Jewish life in the U.S.S.R. until he was imprisoned, threatened with his life, and finally forced to leave (1927). In 1940 he came to the United States and established the network of Chabad-Lubavitch educational institutions throughout the U.S.A. and across the world.

This day also marks the beginning of the leadership of his son-in-law Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, known as the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

#### SHEVAT 15 - TU B'SHEVAT

In Jewish tradition, the fifteenth day of Shevat is the "New Year" of the trees, opening the season in which trees begin to bud in the Holy Land of Israel. Just as Rosh Hashanah, the New Year for all creation, is the day on which man is judged, so too is Tu B'Shevat the day of judgment for earth's trees.

To commemorate this special day, Jews throughout the world eat the distinctive foods that are characteristic of the Holy Land, especially the five fruits mentioned in the Torah: Grapes, Figs, Pomegranates, Olives, and Dates.

#### SHEVAT 22

Yartzeit of Rebbetzin Chaya Mushka Schneerson, wife of the Lubavitcher Rebbe (1988).

# SHABBAT AND FESTIVAL CANDLES

Throughout the ages, light has stirred the imagination of poets, mystics, scientists and psychologists. Because its nature is so different from other material entities, it is often used to describe spiritual insight. Shabbat is a day of light; its pattern and value-orientation is different from the other days of the week. Thus it is the lighting of the Shabbat Candles that ushers in this state of awareness and inspires us to feel the way it permeates our lives. The mystics call this day of light the Shabbat Queen, and the responsibility for lighting the candles and inducing this change of perspective is the woman's. It is she who welcomes the Shabbat Queen into the home.

Young girls, from about the age of three, are encouraged to light their own candles, to involve and educate them in this profound and beautiful mitzyah.

The Shabbat Candles are lit 18 minutes before sunset.





#### Chabad Hebrew School Viewing a Torah Scroll. ChabadWinnipeg.org/parshah

# OCTOBER 2011 - TISHREI/CHESHVAN 5772 תשרי–חשון תשע"ב

#### FAST OF GEDALIAH

The day after Rosh Hashanah is a public fast day, commemorating the slaying of Gedaliah. Gedaliah was the leader of the small Jewish community which remained in Israel at the beginning of the Babylonian exile. Tragically, these last remnants were then dispersed as well.

#### YOM KIPPUR

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. On this day, we acknowledge and regret our past sins and resolve to improve in the future. In return, G-d promises us forgiveness. This day is one of spiritual cleansing; we refrain from working, eating and drinking, washing, anointing with oils or lotions, marital relations and wearing leather shoes.

#### **SUKKOT**

After a period of sober and reverent reflection during the Days of Awe, we are ready for the joyous holiday of Sukkot, "the Season of our Joy", rejoicing in the knowledge that G-d has inscribed us for a good and healthy new year. The name Sukkot is derived from the word Sukkah, or hut. In commemoration of the protective "clouds of glory" with

which G-d surrounded the Jewish people on their way out of Egypt, we live in makeshift huts during the seven days of this holiday.

#### THE FOUR KINDS

During Sukkot, we observe the special mitzvah of shaking the Lulav (palm branch) and the Etrog (citron). Taken together with the Hadas (myrtle) and the Aravah (willow), these very different plant species represent the unity of disparate types of Jews who all play their part in forming the Jewish nation.

#### SIMCHAT TORAH

Simchat Torah marks the day we complete the reading of the Torah in its annual cycle. On the evening of Simchat Torah, (and in many communities, on the previous evening of Shemini Atzeret as well) we make seven Hakafot (circuits) around the table upon which the Torah is read, dancing and rejoicing with the Torah scrolls. During morning services on Simchat Torah, we complete the Torah, reading the last Torah portion. We immediately start reading the Torah from the beginning again - remembering that the Torah is an endless source of wisdom, each cycle challenging us to discover its ever-deeper meaning.

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Parsha Pucks at the Jewish Learning Centre. ChabadWinnipeg.org/youth

# MARCH 2012 - ADAR/NISSAN 5772 אדר–ניטן תשע"ב

#### ADAR 7

Birthday and Yartzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu (Moses), who led the Jewish people out of Egyptian bondage.

#### **PURIM**

The actual story of Purim, as told in the Scroll of Esther, is as fascinating and spell-binding as any best seller. Yet, though it is sacred scripture, we do not find the name of G-d mentioned even once! But within the intricate details of the Megillah, we can detect the unmistakable hand of Divine Providence. And the closer we examine the story, the more we discover that even seemingly insignificant events are precisely arranged by the hand of the Al-mighty.

# THE MITZVOT OF PURIM ARE:

 The Fast of Esther, held before Purim, to commemorate the day of prayer and fasting which the Jews held before their victory.

- Listen to the reading of Megillat Esther (the Scroll of Esther) at night and day, recounting the story of Purim.
- Send gifts containing at least two types of ready-to-eat food to one or more friends on the day of Purim. These gifts, called Mishloach Manot ("sending portions"), should preferably be sent via a third party.
- Give Matanot L'evyonim ("gifts of charity to the poor"). While Tzedakah (charity) is a year-round responsibility, it is a particularly special Mitzvah on Purim. Give to at least two needy individuals on Purim day.
- Celebrate with a special festive and joyous meal.
- It is traditional to give 3 half dollar coins to charity before Purim, to commemorate the annual half-shekel given by each Jew in the times of the Holy Temple. This mitzvah is usually performed in the synagogue.

WE WISH YOU ALL A JOYOUS PURIM!









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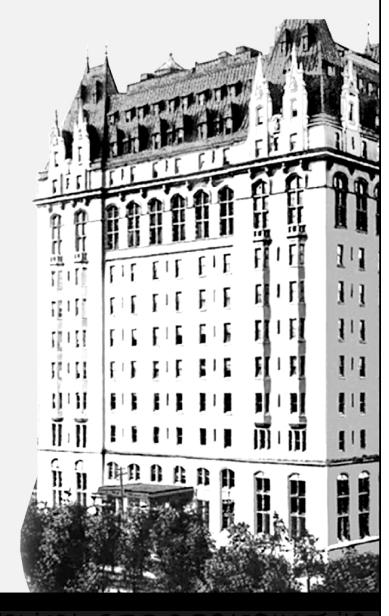
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