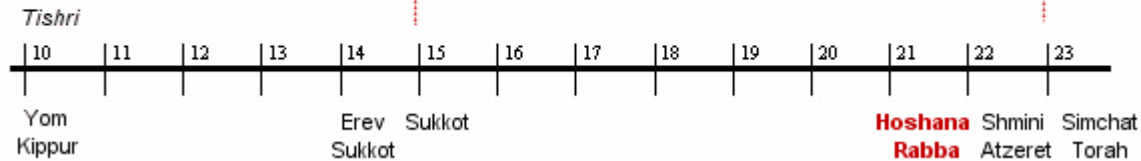




# Hoshana Rabba -

## The Great Salvation

*Season of our Joy*



### Hoshana Rabba

The seventh (and last) day of Sukkot is called *Hoshana Rabba*, (הושעֵנָה רַבָּה) or the “Great Salvation,” a climactic day of praise to the LORD that was also viewed by the rabbis as a mini-Yom Kippur, the day on which the heavenly decrees made on Rosh Hashanah and sealed on Yom Kippur are actually sent out to be fulfilled:



Hoshana Rabba is both a somber day of reflection as well as a day of joy and celebration.

Rosh Hashanah	Yom Kippur	Hoshana Rabbah
Judgment is rendered	Judgment is sealed	Judgment is delivered

According to the Mishnah (Sukkah 4:5), during the time of the Temple willow branches were placed around the altar and a circuit was made around the altar while the people recited: “Hoshiah na” (הושיעֵנָה נָא) - “Save us, please!” (Psalm 118: 25).

The New Testament records that it was on the last day of Sukkot (i.e., “the great day”) - perhaps just after the dramatic water libation ceremony - that Yeshua stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his inner being will flow rivers of living water’” (John 7:37-38).

If Hoshana Rabba represents “judgment delivered,” then Yeshua was teaching that the Spirit of God would deliver the good verdict - and the true freedom - that Messiah secured for us through his sacrificial death as our atonement before God...



### The Plea for Water...

The early sages had taught “at the feast of Sukkot judgment is made concerning the waters,” referring to the rain needed for the forthcoming planting season. The historian Josephus calls the ceremonial drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam “the very sacred close (συμπρασμα) of the year,” since the amount of rainfall over the next few months would directly impact the harvest in the spring. The need for rain over the winter months in Israel was an ongoing need for the welfare of the people...

“With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. 12:3). Yeshua once encountered a woman who had come to draw water from a well and said, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:13-14). Likewise he taught earlier in his ministry, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matt. 5:6). Just as the people understood they needed physical rain to sustain their physical lives, so Yeshua pointed to himself as the source of “spiritual rain,” or “living water” that would sustain their spiritual lives. The “rain of blessing,” then, referred to the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit that would become an inner source of life for those who believe... As Yeshua said, “out of his inmost being will flow rivers of living water,” which some have thought refers back to the miraculous waters that were given in the desert: “Each soul will be a rock smitten in the thirsty land, from which crystal rivers of life-giving grace shall flow.” Indeed the Hallel that is recited during the festival includes the verse: “He turned the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a fountain of waters” (Psalm 114:8).



### Preparations for Hoshana Rabba

- **Greeting your friends**  
Since Hoshana Rabba marks the time when the LORD decrees the Book of Life, a custom is to greet your friends with the phrase, “*piska tava*”, meaning (in Aramaic) “a good note” (referring to the final inscription and sealing in the book of Life).
- **Staying up all night**  
It is a common practice is to stay awake all night on the night before Hoshana Rabba. During this time the book of Deuteronomy and the entire book of Psalms is read (this is to ensure that the Torah has been read through before the beginning of Simchat Torah). It is also customary to prepare the willow branches for the next morning’s Hoshana service.



### The Hoshana Rabba Service

During the Hoshana Rabba service, many choose to wear the white kittel (the robe worn on Yom Kippur) during the morning prayers. In almost every congregation the leader will wear the kittel since the day is a Day of Judgment. In the synagogue itself, the *parokhet* (curtain on the ark) remains white and extra candles (that remain from Yom Kippur) may be lit.

- **Seven Times Around the Sanctuary**

During the six previous days of Sukkot the lulav is shaken during the *Hallel* (praise psalms sung right after the Amidah in the morning service) as well as during the *Hoshana* - a hymn that begins with *Hoshi'ana* [save us, please!] that is sung during the service. The Torah is taken from the Ark and set on the *bimah* [torah reading table] and the congregation circles it (once) in a processional (called *hakkafah*) while shaking their *lulavot* and carrying their *etrogim*.

On Hoshana Rabba, however, instead of one Hoshana, seven *Hoshanot* are recited and seven *hakkafot* are made around the sanctuary. Normally all the Torah scrolls are taken from the Ark and put on the bema while this sevenfold processional takes place.



- **The Beating of the Willows**

At the conclusion of this of the Hakkafot, an additional ritual is conducted in which the branches of the willow (*aravot*) are struck upon the ground (or upon a chair) five times until their leaves fall off. This ceremony recalls the days of the Temple when branches were struck against the ground near the altar as a symbolic gesture of casting away of one's sins. In like manner, the "beating of the willows" ceremony symbolizes the ridding of any remaining sins (the leaves representing these transgressions) that might yet influence God's decision to "seal" the Book of Life with our names inscribed therein. Many Jews will keep the beaten willow branches to use when they burn the chametz (yeast) just before Passover.

- **Torah Readings**

There are four aliyot (separate individuals called to bless the Torah) on Hoshana Rabba:

Portion:	Numbers 29:26-34
Reader 1	29:26-28
Reader 2	29:29-31
Reader 3	29:32-34
Reader 4	29:29-34



### The Closure of Sukkot

For many Jews, Hoshana Rabba is the last day one shakes the lulav and etrog and eats within the sukkah. Round challot are often served, as well as apples and honey (just like the evening meal of Rosh Hashanah). There is a widespread custom to eat kreplach (Jewish ravioli, dough filled with meat) on this day.

The afternoon of Hoshana Rabba is the winding down of Sukkot. Some people visit the Sukkah one last time to eat a snack and recite the following prayer: "May it be that we merit to dwell in the sukkah made of Leviathan," an idea that derives from the Talmud where it is said that the LORD will slay the Leviathan in the end of days and make sukkot out of its hide for the righteous.

On the evening following Hoshana Rabba begins the festival of Shmini Atzeret, sometimes called the "extra day" of Sukkot.

### *Hosanna! Save us now, LORD!*

נָא	הַצְלִיחָה	יְהוָה	אֲנָא	נָא	הוֹשִׁיעָה	יְהוָה	אֲנָא
na'	hatz-lee- <u>chah</u> '	Adonai	an-na'	na'	ho-shee-ah'	Adonai	an-na'
נָא - particle interj "now, please"	צָלַח - v. "to prosper, advance, succeed" hiphl imper ms paragogic ה	יהוה - n Shem Hagadol "YHVH" fr> הָיָה -v "to be"	אֲנָא - particle interj "please, beseech, o now!"	נָא - particle adv "now, please"	ישע - v "to save, deliver, bring victory" hiphl imper ms ה+ הַיָּשׁוּעַ - I-	יהוה - n Shem Hagadol; "YHVH" fr> הָיָה -v "to be"	אֲנָא - particle interj "please, help! o now!"
now	prosper [us]	O LORD	please!	now	save [us]	O LORD	please!

אֲנָא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא אֲנָא יְהוָה הַצְלִיחָה נָא

"Please, O LORD, save us now; please, O LORD, prosper us now!" (Psalm 118:25)

אֲנָא יְהוָה הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא  
אֲנָא יְהוָה הַצְלִיחָה נָא

ὦ κύριε ὠσόσω δὴ ὦ κύριε εὐδόσω δὴ (LXX)



*Blessed is the One coming in the name of the LORD*

יְהוָה	מִבֵּית	בִּרְכֹנֹכֶם	יְהוָה	בְּשֵׁם	הַבָּא	בְּרוּךְ
Adonai	mee-beit'	be-rakh'-noo-khem'	Adonai	be-shem'	ha-bah'	ba-rookh'
יהוה - n abs "YHVH" fr> יהוה-v "to be"	מן - prep "from, out of" בית - n ms cstr "house" [of]	ברך v. "to bless" piel prf 1cpl "we bless" [intens] כם - 2mpl sfx "you" ending	יהוה - n abs "YHVH" fr> יהוה-v "to be"	ב - pfx "in" שם - n ms "name" ms cstr	ה - "the" בוא - v qal partic ms abs	ברך v "to bless" qal passive partic ms ברך "knee"
the LORD	from [the] house [of]	we bless you	the LORD	in [the] name [of]	the one coming	blessed [ he is]

בְּרוּךְ הַבָּא בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה בִּרְכֹנֹכֶם מִבֵּית יְהוָה

"Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the LORD;  
we bless you from the house of the LORD." (Psalm 118:26)

**ברוך הבא בשם יהוה  
ברכוכם מבית יהוה**

εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου  
εὐλογήκαμεν ὑμᾶς ἐξ οἴκου κυρίου (LXX)

*Come, all who are thirsty*

לַמַּיִם	לָכֹוּ	כָּל-צֹמְאִים	הוּי
la-ma'-yeem	le-khoo'	kohl'-tzah-mei'	hoi'
ל - pfx "to/for" ה - pfx "the" מַיִם - n mpl abs "water, waters"	יֵלֶךְ - v "go, come, walk" qal imp mpl ו	כָּל - n ms cstr "all, each, every, any" צֹמְאִים - adj/n ms abs "thirsty [one]" fr> צֹמְאִים v thirst	הוּי - interj "ho!, hey! look! come!"
to the waters	you come	all who are thirsty	come!

הוּי כָּל-צֹמְאִים לָכֹוּ לַמַּיִם

"Come, all who are thirsty,  
come to the waters!" (Isa. 55:1a)

**הוּי כָּל-צֹמְאִים לָכֹוּ לַמַּיִם**

οἱ διψῶντες πορεύεσθε ἐφ' ὕδωρ (LXX)