



# Chagim Supreme @ sajes

A weekly idea from SAJES Department of Early Childhood Education  
for the Early Childhood & Primary School Classroom

Week of: September 7 - 12, 2008

Elul 7 - 12, 5768

Issue #1

## *All About CHAGIM SUPREME- Jewish Holidays*

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I was asked to write about Jewish holidays this year for the weekly curricular piece from the SAJES Early Childhood Department. Some, including myself sometimes, think that there is enough holiday information available for the Jewish early childhood and primary educator. So, I will try to present a different focus that will include integrating Israel into the holiday observance/celebration as well as a connection with the agricultural cycle of Israel. I will try each week to extend the learning with some Jewish text that might be appropriate to the holiday, some "green" suggestions for the classroom holiday learning, some Hebrew vocabulary that can be incorporated into the classroom, websites and other sources and some new ideas to stimulate student discovery.

I also would like educators to have some education about the holidays for themselves. If, any of you say, "I didn't know that!" then I will be satisfied that I have supported you as well as your class. Please feel free to contact me. Shalom - **Sue**

## *Month of ELUL (Although Elul is not a holiday it is an important connection to the Tishrei holidays.)*

Rosh Chodesh Elul is Sunday, August 31 and the month of Elul ends on Sunday, September 28 2008

Some themes for the month of Elul are 1) Memories of the past year and what has been accomplished 2) Goals for next year.

Elul is the seventh month of the year counting from Nisan (the month of Passover) and the twelfth and last month of the year counting from Tishrei (the month of Rosh Hashanah). It is ALWAYS 29 days.

The month of Elul is a time of repentance in preparation for the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This mood of repentance builds through the month of Elul to the period of Selichot, to Rosh Hashanah, and finally to Yom Kippur.

The name of the month (spelled Alef-Lamed-Vav-Lamed) is said to be an acronym of "Ani l'dodi v'dodi li," "I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine," (from Song of Songs 6:3), where the "Beloved" is God and the "I" is the Jewish people. In Aramaic (the spoken language of the Jewish people at the time that the Hebrew months were named), the word "Elul" means "search," which is appropriate, because this is a time of year when we are to search our hearts.

During the month of Elul, from the second day of Elul to the 28th day, the shofar (a hollowed out ram's horn) is blown after morning services every weekday. The shofar is not blown on Shabbat. The rabbis explained the custom of blowing shofar as a wake-up call to sleepers, designed to rouse people from their self-indulgence. It is a call to make atonement. The blast of the shofar is a very piercing sound when done properly.

Elul is also a time to begin the process of asking forgiveness for wrongs done to other people. According to Jewish tradition, G-d cannot forgive us for sins committed against another person until we have first obtained forgiveness from the person we have wronged. This process of seeking forgiveness continues through Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Prayers for forgiveness called selichot are added to the daily cycle of religious services.

This website shares a thought a day through the month of Elul. You can click on it and sign up!

<http://www.craignco.com/jewels/jeweladay-confirm.php>

## *IN THE CLASSROOM*

There is so much going on in our classes as the year begins. Consider a new tradition of blowing a shofar at the beginning of each class, and asking the children to pause for 15 to 30 seconds to think about the kind of people we would like to be. Keep a list of their goals for themselves to add to as the year progresses. The class can create a shofar from recycled materials such as tubing, funnels and bottles (do you have any empty bottles from Israeli products?!).

A song using **Ani L'dodi V'dodi Li** can be found on the JCCA website. Click here to Learn - [Ani Lidodi Vidodi Li](#)

*"Only the holidays twine themselves together to form the circle of the year." Franz Rosenzweig*

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