

Minyan Katan

High Holiday Helper



USER'S MANUAL

Welcome

Shana Tovah! Welcome to the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper.

The Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper is designed to provide you and your synagogue with the instructions and guidance you will need to facilitate a spiritually engaging family service for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The services are targeted to meet the interests and needs of children ages 1-6 with integrated prayer, song, dance, holiday-related activities, and storytime. Parents or caregivers participate in the service alongside their children, infusing quality family time into the richness of the holiday.

- The Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper is intended to be useful for individuals at all levels of Jewish education and musical ability. For those who have never done this before, you may choose to follow the Leader's Guide and CD word for word. If you are comfortable ad-libbing, just refer to the talking points in the margins. If you have other tunes your congregation knows or enjoys, substitute as you see fit. The Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper is designed specifically to allow you to pick and choose the elements that will make your High Holiday children's services the best they can be.

Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper components:

- **User's Manual** This provides background information and instructions you will need to facilitate the children's services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The User's Manual includes activity descriptions, lists of materials you will need, notes on what should be prepared in advance of the holidays, and room set-up suggestions.
- **Leader's Guide** This takes the leader step by step through the services with suggested talking points, detailed scripting, Hebrew prayers with English transliteration, English summaries of prayers, lyrics for holiday songs, family activities, and icons noting prayer and dance choreography.
- **Teaching CD** This includes all of the prayers and songs used in these High Holiday services. For some of the prayers, the CD includes alternate tunes. Please listen to the CD and consult with your synagogue clergy as to the appropriate melody choice for your children's services.
- **Activity Templates** These are needed to facilitate successful Tashlich and Treasure Hunt activities on Rosh Hashanah, as well as Jonah Bingo on Yom Kippur.

We hope you find the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper helpful in creating an enriching family High Holiday experience. Let us know about your experiences and any suggestions by contacting us at minyankatan@yahoo.com.

Getting Started

Begin by reading through this User's Manual and then reviewing the Leader's Guide. The User's Manual contains activity descriptions, lists of materials you will need, notes on what should be prepared in advance of the holidays, and room set-up suggestions. The sooner you read this User's Manual, the better prepared you will be.

Once familiar with the User's Manual, move on to reading the Leader's Guide as often as necessary to become comfortable with its contents. Knowing the structure of the service and being as familiar as possible with the script will make the difference between a High Holiday service that feels like a lecture and one that engages and inspires families.

Notes on the User's Manual

Throughout the User's Manual you will see notes about the timing of Shabbat in relation to the High Holidays and the impact that has on the service and appropriate activities. Make sure to determine in advance of the High Holidays which activities will be done on which days. For example, you should coordinate with your synagogue on which day Tashlich will be done in your congregation.

A materials list is provided for each activity. If you do not already have them, either purchase them or try borrowing them through your synagogue office or from members of the congregation. If it is necessary to purchase materials, you may want to consider asking for sponsorship of the service by one of your synagogue committees or by your synagogue school parents' association where applicable. Whenever possible, please recycle or reuse materials. For example, the small pieces of paper used for the Tashlich activity on Rosh Hashanah can be saved and used for the Jonah Bingo activity on Yom Kippur.

Lastly, you will need to work closely with your synagogue to ensure that the children's service has a Torah(s) (either real or plush), either an Aron (ark) or a table with a Tallit to cover the Torah(s), appropriate seating for participants (see General Room Set-Up below) and a Shofar blower (see next section) to help bring the service to life.

Notes on the Leader's Guide

The Leader's Guide is intended to be useful and user-friendly for leaders at various comfort levels. Therefore, it contains talking points as well as a full script. On each page, the talking points are in gray on the left side and the script is in black on the right side. The prayers and songs, with transliterations, English summaries, as well as choreography where appropriate, are contained in boxes throughout the Leader's Guide. Note that all words written in blue in the Leader's Guide are notes for the leader and are **not** intended to be read aloud.



Shofar Blowing

A Shofar-blowing service is included in the Rosh Hashanah section of the Leader's Guide. If possible, we suggest asking your synagogue's main service Shofar blower to blow the Shofar for the children's service as well. This helps make the parents and children feel connected with the main service and allows them to experience an important part of the synagogue's holiday celebration. We suggest that you arrange with the Shofar blower to join the children's services at a specific time. If this is not possible, simply have an adult who will be attending the children's service be responsible for going to get the Shofar blower from the main service at the appropriate time. You may wish to move the Shofar service section to another place in the service to accommodate your Shofar blower.

If the main service Shofar blower is not able to attend your service, ask your synagogue for suggestions of members who are competent Shofar blowers. If there is no one able to blow the Shofar for your service, skip the Shofar blowing itself but be sure to include the Shofar-blowing song.

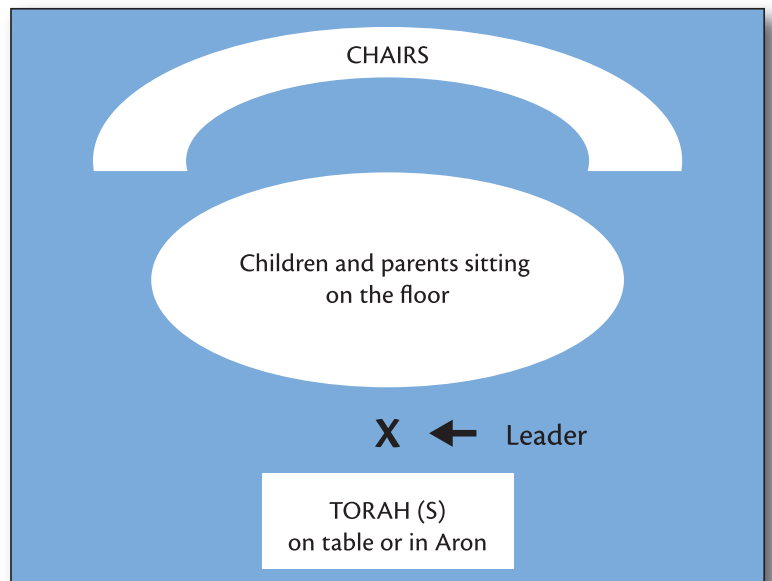
General Room Set-Up

The recommended set-up is to position an Aron (or Ark) or table with a Tallit to cover the Torah(s) (real or plush) at the front of the room, with chairs set out in a wide semi-circle facing the Torah(s). To help create an intimate prayer space, we encourage the children to sit on the floor WITH their parents for the whole service. The leader can then be in front of the Torah(s) facing the group, sitting on the floor as well. We have found that leaving a large amount of floor space between the Aron and the chairs is the best way to arrange this.

Try to stay away from auditorium-type seating on chairs in straight lines. This immediately makes "participants" feel like "observers," which is the opposite of what this service is designed to achieve. Additionally, the participants should be able to get up and move around at various stages of the service. Chairs in straight lines can make such movement difficult.

If your room is rectangular, try to set it up so the layout is wide rather than deep. This leaves as little empty space as possible in the back of the room for disruptive behavior. If the space is there, the children will use it -as will the parents- to congregate and chat.

If you have a very small group, you might consider a large circle.



These services include a storytime, during which you may want to sit on a chair to help everyone see and follow the storybook. If sitting on the floor for the whole service cannot work for your group, you might ask parents and children to sit together on the floor at least for the story so that everyone can see the pictures in the book.

Regardless of the set-up that works best for your space, it is very important to keep the children with the parents. If separated (e.g., children on floor, parents on chairs), the parents quickly lose focus and chat among themselves rather than engaging in the service with their children as well as ensuring that their children do not infringe on the spiritual experience of other families.

Sound and Noise

Depending on the practice of your synagogue, if there will be 30 or more participants at your service, you may want to consider using a microphone. This will save the leader's voice and can help with noise control.

Remember: Talking softly can be much more effective at getting people's attention than yelling – with or without a microphone.

Parental noise, rather than children's noise, can become a problem. Therefore, let parents know this and ask for their help in keeping parental noise to a minimum right at the outset of the service. One effective method is to "deputize" the parents as "official shushers." Feel free to use any method with which you are comfortable to convey the importance of retaining parental focus during the service.

Jewish Calendar Year Chart

During the service, you will be telling the participants what year begins with this Rosh Hashanah (see Leader's Guide, page 2). The following chart provides you with that information.

Rosh Hashanah 2010 – 5771
Rosh Hashanah 2011 – 5772
Rosh Hashanah 2012 – 5773
Rosh Hashanah 2013 – 5774
Rosh Hashanah 2014 – 5775
Rosh Hashanah 2015 – 5776
Rosh Hashanah 2016 – 5777
Rosh Hashanah 2017 – 5778

Rosh Hashanah 2018 – 5779
Rosh Hashanah 2019 – 5780
Rosh Hashanah 2020 – 5781
Rosh Hashanah 2021 – 5782
Rosh Hashanah 2022 – 5783
Rosh Hashanah 2023 – 5784
Rosh Hashanah 2024 – 5785
Rosh Hashanah 2025 – 5786



Activity Preparation

Rosh Hashanah – Tashlich Activity (See Leader's Guide, page 10)



Materials Needed:

- Plush Torah(s) or real Torah(s) for Torah parade
- Blue tarp – 12' x 16', available at home repair stores, craft stores, and online.
- 6 light-colored posterboards – 22" x 28"
- Masking tape
- 6 large bowls
- Small scraps of 2.5" x 2.5" recycled paper for Tashlich "crumbs" – at least 6 per participant
- Large box to collect used Tashlich "crumbs" to recycle for Jonah Bingo game
- Tashlich story (see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual)

To Do Ahead of Time:

1. Collect materials needed.
2. Write in large letters *in the middle* of each poster board ONE of the following sins relevant to parents and children:
 - "I am sorry for: NOT TELLING THE TRUTH"
 - "I am sorry for: YELLING FOR NO REASON"
 - "I am sorry for: HITTING"
 - "I am sorry for: NOT SHARING"
 - "I am sorry for: BEING ON THE PHONE WHILE PLAYING"
 - "I am sorry for: ?? CAN YOU COME UP WITH YOUR OWN??"
3. Write in large letters *at the bottom* of each poster board:
 - "Talk about meaning and relevance"
 - "Take one crumb" – include an arrow pointing down
4. Set up room for Tashlich Activity

Sample posterboard:

I am sorry for:
NOT TELLING THE TRUTH
*Talk about meaning and relevance
*Take one crumb ↓

Tashlich Activity Room Set-Up:

For the day you will be doing the Tashlich activity, have 6 small tables or stations set up around the perimeter of the room. Each station should have a large bowl filled with small scraps of paper for Tashlich "crumbs." Make sure to have enough paper in EACH bowl for every participant to take one. You can ask the synagogue office for any recyclable paper to cut into scraps for this purpose. Place one of the prepared poster boards above each bowl. Lay out the tarp on the floor in a corner of the room to be used to simulate the flowing water during the activity.

Tashlich Activity Description:

For the day that the community will be doing Tashlich, a Tashlich component is included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper service. As laid out in the Leader's Guide, storytime will come before the Tashlich activity. The story on this day should preferably be one about Tashlich (see book recommendations, page 8). This will be a nice introduction to the Tashlich activity.

Invite families to visit each of the stations around the room. Instruct them to spend a few minutes discussing the meaning of each sin or mistake and the ways in which each particular mistake applies to the parents or children in that family. Each member of the family to whom the sin applies should take a scrap of paper from the bowl. Let them know they will have 10 minutes to visit all of the stations.

When it seems that the families have gone to each station, instruct families to gather at the blue tarp spread on the floor. Ask older children or parent volunteers to move the tarp so that it looks like flowing water. At the flowing water, have each person throw his/her papers (one at a time) onto the tarp – casting away each sin. As families finish "Tashlich," the activity will end with everyone singing together "Apples Dipped in Honey." (CD track 13). Ask for help from parents to collect the used scraps of paper as well as the unused pieces from the bowls. Use the large box listed above to save this paper for the Yom Kippur activity (see below).



Activity Preparation

Rosh Hashanah – Treasure Hunt (See Leader's Guide, page 11)



Materials Needed:

- Plush Torah(s) or real Torah(s) for Torah parade
- Treasure Hunt questions for all participants (template for reproduction included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper)
- One copy of the Treasure Hunt pictures (included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper)
- Masking tape
- Prizes for Treasure Hunt for all participants (if being used):
 - stickers (check with your clergy on use of stickers on High Holidays)
 - small chocolate candies (be aware of your synagogue's kashrut requirements and common food allergies)
- General Rosh Hashanah story (see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual)

To Do Ahead of Time:

1. Collect materials needed.
2. Make copies of the Treasure Hunt questions for all participants.
3. Set up the room for the Treasure Hunt activity in advance.

Treasure Hunt Room Set-Up:

For the day you will be doing the Treasure Hunt, have the 6 pictures of Rosh Hashanah symbols hung up around the room. The pictures should be placed above children's reach to ensure they will not take the pictures down. The pictures can also be placed down low, even on the floor, if they cannot be easily picked up by excited little hands.

Treasure Hunt Activity Description:

For the day the community will **not** be doing Tashlich (i.e., Day 2 of Rosh Hashanah or Day 1, if it is Shabbat), the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper service includes a Rosh Hashanah Treasure Hunt.

For this activity, hand out pieces of paper with the Treasure Hunt questions to each family. Tell them that they will have 10 minutes or so to figure out the answers to the questions and find the corresponding pictures around the room. Be sure to tell everyone not to touch the pictures when they find them – just to locate the pictures so that everyone will have a chance to find them. Once families locate each of the pictures, they should return to their seats. If prizes are being used, they should be handed out to all participants at that point.



Activity Preparation

Yom Kippur – Jonah Bingo (See Leader's Guide, page 31)



Materials Needed:

- Plush Torah(s) or real Torah(s) for Torah parade
- Jonah Bingo cards for all participants (template for reproduction included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper)
- Small scraps of paper for Jonah Bingo game pieces (reuse Tashlich “crumbs”) – 9 per child
- General Yom Kippur or High Holiday story (see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual)
- Prizes for Jonah Bingo for all participants (if being used):
 - stickers (check with your clergy on use of stickers on High Holidays)
 - small chocolate candies (be aware of your synagogue's kashrut requirements and common food allergies)

To Do Ahead of Time:

1. Collect materials needed.
2. Copy Jonah Bingo cards for all participants.

Jonah Bingo Room Set-Up:

No special room set-up is necessary for Jonah Bingo. However, this activity works best with everyone on the floor, as the Bingo pieces may move if held on a participant's lap.

Jonah Bingo Activity Description:

During the afternoon service, Mincha, on Yom Kippur, we read the story of Jonah as the Haftarah portion. The Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper service incorporates this into the family experience during the morning Yom Kippur service.

After a Yom Kippur story, Jonah Bingo cards will be handed out to all the participants. These cards each have easily identifiable pictures taken from the Jonah story. Along with the Bingo cards, each child should receive 9 scraps of paper to cover all of the pictures on his/her Bingo card. You may want to enlist the help of a few parents to pass out the Jonah Bingo cards and scraps of paper.

Explain that the children need to listen carefully to the Jonah story about to be read, and then cover each picture with a scrap of paper as the picture is mentioned in the story. Tell the participants that once all pictures on a child's card have been covered, that child should yell out “Bingo!”

Read the story of Jonah (see Leader's Guide, page 31), putting special emphasis on those bold and italicized words that represent the pictures on the cards. Depending on the age of the children at the service and the participation of the parents, the leader may need to alert the families to the fact that a picture might be mentioned shortly or that one may have just been mentioned.

Toward the end of the story, children will start to yell “Bingo!” By the end of the story, all of the children will have covered all their pictures, so everyone wins the game. If prizes are being used, they should be given to all of the children when the story and game are over.



Storybook List

During the Minyan Katan High Holiday service, after the Torah parade, there is time allotted for a story to be read to the participants. On the day of the Tashlich activity, we suggest reading a book about Tashlich so the participants will have an understanding of the concept before doing the activity. On the other day of Rosh Hashanah, a general story about Rosh Hashanah can be read. On Yom Kippur, a story about Yom Kippur or about saying “I’m sorry” would be appropriate.

Be sure to read through your books ahead of time with your participant demographics in mind, and make any changes so the story is appropriate for your group. Remember to consider timing and the average age of the children at your service. Skip over text from the books to shorten them as necessary.

Below is a list of books for reading during your services. Please visit www.minyankatan.com for the most current list, as new books are continually being added. If you have a book you think should be included on this list, please e-mail the information to minyankatan@yahoo.com.

General Rosh Hashanah Books:

Goldin, Barbara Diamond, *The World's Birthday: A Rosh Hashanah Story*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990.
Rouss, Sylvia A., *Sammy Spider's First Rosh Hashanah*, Kar-Ben, 1996.
Epstein, Sylvia, *How the Rosh Hashanah Challah Became Round*, Gefen, 1993.
Heller, Linda, *Today is the Birthday of the World*, Dutton Children's Books, 2009.
Kimmelman, Leslie, *Sound the Shofar!: A Story for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, HarperCollins, 1998.
Cohen, Deborah Bodin, *Engineer Ari and the Rosh Hashanah Ride*, Kar-Ben, 20008.

Tashlich Books:

Wayland, April Halprin, *New Year at the Pier: A Rosh Hashanah Story*, Dial Books for Young Readers, 2009.
Schnur, Susan, *Tashlich at Turtle Rock*, Kar-Ben, August 2010.

Yom Kippur Books:

Jules, Jacqueline, *The Hardest Word: A Yom Kippur Story*, Kar-Ben Publishing, 2001.
Kimmelman, Leslie, *Sound the Shofar!: A Story for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*, HarperCollins, 1998.



Combined List of Materials

Includes Rosh Hashanah Day 1, Rosh Hashanah Day 2, and Yom Kippur Activities

Item	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plush Torah(s) or real Torah(s) for Torah parade • Blue tarp – 12" x 16" available at home repair stores, craft stores, and online • 6 light-colored posterboards – 22' x 28' • Masking tape • 6 large bowls • Small scraps of paper for Tashlich "crumbs" and Jonah Bingo game pieces – 9 per participant • Large box to collect used Tashlich "crumbs" to recycle for Jonah Bingo game • Tashlich story – see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual • Treasure Hunt questions for all families – template for reproduction included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper • Treasure Hunt pictures – included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper • General Rosh Hashanah story - see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual • General Yom Kippur or High Holiday story – see Storybook List on page 8 of this manual • Jonah Bingo cards for all children – template for reproduction included in the Minyan Katan High Holiday Helper • Prizes for Treasure Hunt activity and Jonah Bingo activity for all children, if being used – 2 prizes per child <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stickers (check with your clergy on use of stickers on High Holidays) • small chocolate candies (be aware of your synagogue's kashrut requirements and common food allergies) 	

