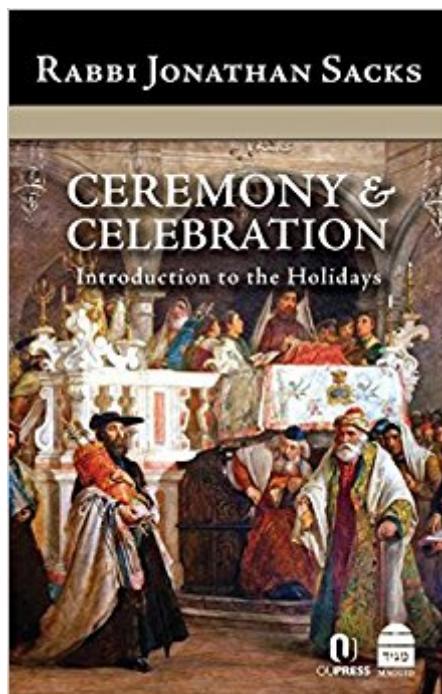


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# Ceremony & Celebration: Introduction To The Holidays



## **Synopsis**

When did Rosh HaShana, the anniversary of creation, become a day of judgement? How does Yom Kippur unite the priest's atonement with the prophet's repentance? What makes Kohelet, read on Sukkot, the most joyful book in the Bible? Why is the remembrance of the Pesah story so central to Jewish morality? And which does Shavuot really celebrate the law or the land? Bringing together Rabbi Sacks's acclaimed introductions to the Koren Sacks Mahzorim, Ceremony & Celebration reveals the stunning interplay of biblical laws, rabbinic edicts, liturgical themes, communal rituals and profound religious meaning of each of the five central Jewish holidays.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks is one of the world's leading Jewish thinkers and moral voices of our time, laureate of the 2016 Templeton Prize. Educated at Oxford and Cambridge Universities, King's College London and Jews' College, Rabbi Sacks served as chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 until 2013. The author of numerous books on Jewish thought, his work has included a new English translation and commentary for the Koren Sacks Siddur, the first new Orthodox siddur in a generation, as well as powerful commentaries for the five Koren Sacks Mahzorim.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks is rightly considered by many Jews and non-Jews as a spokesman for Judaism, a moral voice for our time. His many writings on the Bible, on the prayer books, and others are clear, interesting, and informative. He sprinkles his explanations with delightful stories. He makes Judaism seem pleasant and rational and joyful, even when he quotes sayings by mystical

teachers. I have read many of his 23 books and know of none that is not excellent. He discusses five Jewish holidays in this volume: Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Pessah, and Shavuot. His goal is to make the holidays meaningful for the average reader. His subtitles for the five holidays are: The Anniversary of Creation, Seeking Forgiveness, Season of Joy, Finding Freedom, and The Greatest Gift. Taking Rosh Hashana as an example, among much else, he writes about the number seven in Judaism signifying holiness. Rosh Hashana is a celebration of the universe as God's work. The blowing of the shofar on Rosh Hashana is our way of participating in God's coronation, that God is our king. This holiday is the start of a period of national rededication, a covenant-renewal ceremony. It is a time of national return to God. Rosh Hashana tells us that life is short and we must learn how to make the most of it. It reminds us that every breath we take is a gift from God. It teaches us that we are free and that life is meaningful. These and other ideas are found in the holiday prayer book, the Machzor, which Rabbi Sacks explains. The book is filled with a wealth of explanations, such as the biblical scapegoat procedure, what happened at Sinai, the difference between Maimonides and Nachmanides in regard to repentance, how does Yom Kippur change us, the meaning of Kol Nidrei, and much more.

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