

A Once-in-28-Years Opportunity!

On April 8, 2009, a rare event is celebrated by Jewish communities throughout the world.

According to the rabbis of the Talmud (Tractate Berakhot 59a), once every 28 years the sun returns to the same place, at precisely the same time and day of the week, as it was at the moment of its creation.

This confluence of events, a restaging of the heavens as they were at the beginning of time, was not a moment to be overlooked by ancient rabbinic sages.

The next solar celebration marking this event, *Birkat HaChammah* (the blessing of the sun), will occur on Wednesday morning, April 8, 2009. At the first rays of sunrise, the following blessing is recited:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם עשה מעשה בראשית

Baruch Atah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Melech ha'olam oseh ma'aseh b'raysheet.

Blessed are You, O Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who makes the works of Creation.

Some people also recite Psalms 19, 121 and 148.

Even rarer than this once-in-28-years celebration is its occurrence this year on the same day that immediately precedes the beginning of Passover at sunset on April 8. The last time the dates of these two special days converged was in 1925. Before then, there was a gap of more than 600 years.

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HERE COMES
THE SUN ...



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In his article in *Jewish Action*, Rabbi J. David Bleich says this blessing is “a means of prompting people to focus upon the wondrous nature of G-d as the Author of Creation. It is designed to arouse man from his lethargy, to force him to reflect upon this cosmic phenomenon, to summon him to contemplation.” He also suggests that the confluence of the day of this blessing with the day preceding the celebration of the Exodus from Egypt is a profound reminder that the G-d of Creation is the G-d of Redemption.

This solar celebration enables us to take a moment, once, twice, three times in our lifetime, and turn our attention to this amazing blazing ball in the sky which gives us light, warmth, comfort, and energy. Then we turn and thank G-d for this divine, celestial goodness that G-d has bestowed upon us.

Much of this article is from the website blessthesun.org.



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THINGS TO DO:

- ▶ Learn more about how solar energy can help preserve the environment.
- ▶ Support and help promote more renewable energy sources.
- ▶ Wear sun block.
- ▶ Appreciate the ongoing blessings of the sun's warmth and light.
- ▶ Bring more warmth and light into the world with acts of kindness.