



TODAY IS BIRTHDAY OF THE WORLD

Written by Linda Heller

Illustrated by Alison Jay

Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of the world, a day when God and all Earth's creatures celebrate, applauding the contribution that each and every one of us—from the mightiest elephant to the smallest child—can make.

During *Elul*, the final month of the Hebrew year, the *shofar* (ram's horn) sounds in synagogues around the world to announce the approaching year, *Rosh Hashanah*, which begins on the first of *Tishrei*. At this time in the annual cycle we are reminded of the world's formation—the birthday of the world!—and the six days of creation as expressed in the first book of the Torah, *Bereshit* (Genesis).

CELEBRATING WITH TIKKUN OLAM

Children everywhere look forward to birthdays and, naturally, some of the anticipation involves presents. Here is an opportunity to celebrate the world's birthday while teaching a lesson in “price-less” gift giving. We can all observe the birthday of the world, in part, by giving back to the earth. Get creative as your family takes part in the now-more-than-ever critical work of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world). Involve everyone as you increase efforts at recycling, have your little ones decorate signs to remind everyone to turn off the water when brushing teeth, walk rather than use the car when possible, or plant a tree in your yard (or your neighbor's). Allow imagination and actions to soar!

THE BEST WE CAN BE

Throughout *Today Is The Birthday of the World* we see God's creatures performing acts that only they can carry out, a reminder that there is no one correct way to offer the world our best intentions. As the child paints, plants, or shares with others we can only imagine that this is what is intended for us all: life interwoven with *mitzvot*—sacred deeds performed out of responsibility and care—that help make the world the best that it can be. The culmination of each of this book's creatures “doing what comes naturally” is the child who, we are told, is able to “lift the world's spirit.”

How can your children lift the world's spirit? As you encourage inclinations to sing, draw, bake, read, weed, share, smile, respect, consider and love, you foster the world's best. Pj

LEARN MORE
PJLIBRARY.ORG/FAMILIES

VISIT
Pj Library's
FAMILY
Section