



## HALACHOT FOR ROSH HASHANA

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# The Rosh Hashana תשפ"ו Guide

## INTRODUCTION

Dear OU TT readers, the following outline presents a guide to the laws and customs of the observance of Rosh Hashana. May Hashem bless you, your family, and all of ישראל with a year of health, happiness, and success in both רוחניות and גשמיות and may it be the year that we welcome משיח צדקנו! Shana Tova!

## A. EREV-ROSH HASHANA

### התרת נדרים

There is a widespread custom based on the (כג): התרת נדרים – nullification of vows, on Erev-RH in order to enter the new year without violating the prohibition of transgressing vows.<sup>1</sup> Any three men above Bar-Mitzvah are qualified to form a *Beis-Din* and nullify vows of others even if they are relatives with one another or with the one who is nullifying his vows.<sup>2</sup> If you do not understand the Hebrew, it is best to recite it in a language that you understand.<sup>3</sup> One can perform the התרת נדרים over Zoom as long as the three members of the *Beis-Din* are sitting together and they see the person reciting the התרה (i.e. his camera is on).<sup>4</sup> With regard to women, some say that if

she is married, her husband should serve as her messenger for התרת נדרים and add the words “and this is also for my wife,”<sup>5</sup> while others say that it is best for women to rely on the התרת נדרים of *Kol Nidrei* on Yom Kippur, and when doing so, they should recite *Kol Nidrei* silently with the *chazan*.<sup>6</sup>

### MIKVAH

The Rama writes that there is a custom for men to go to the Mikvah on Erev-RH.<sup>7</sup> If one is not able to go to the Mikvah, he can take a shower instead.<sup>8</sup> The shower should be long enough for 9 *kav* of water to be poured on one's head (12 or 16 liters).<sup>9</sup>

### CANDLE LIGHTING



Married women (as well as single men/women at home)<sup>10</sup> light candles for RH.<sup>11</sup> The *bracha* recited on the first night of RH is להדליק “להדליק” נר של יו”ט. Some women also have the custom to recite “שהחיינו” when lighting the candles, while others do not and rely on the “שהחיינו” recited during *kiddush*. One can follow one's family custom.<sup>12</sup> Both Ashkenazim and Sephardim first recite the *bracha* and then light

5. שו”ת תשובות והנהגות (ח”א-שלח)

6. הליכות שלמה (פ”א-י)

7. תקפא-ד

8. משנ”ב סימן תקפ”א סקכ”ו

9. שו”ת מנחת יצחק (ח”ד-כא)

10. שו”ע או”ח סימן רסג-ב

11. Ibid., ה’ סעיף ה’

12. שמירת שבת כהלכתה (מד-ד) ומשנ”ב רסג סקכ”ג

1. See (ש”ה) (תחילת מס’ יומא based on שערי תשובה סק”ז

2. שו”ע, יו”ד סימן רכח-ג

3. חיי אדם (כלל קלח-ח)

4. Rav Schachter פסקי קרונה, #50, אות ה

the candles (a minority of *Ashkenazim* maintain the same order as on Shabbos).<sup>13</sup>

On the second night of RH, candles are also lit, but only after צאת הכוכבים and only from a preexisting lit candle. Ideally, these candles should be prepared before YT, but if they were not, they may be moved only after צאת הכוכבים. The *bracha* recited on the 2nd night is also "להדליק נר של יו"ט" and both *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim* recite the *bracha* before lighting the candles.<sup>14</sup> As on the first night, some women have the custom to recite "שהחיינו", but ideally, they should only recite the *bracha* if they will be eating a new fruit that night or if they are wearing a new dress that night. When reciting the "שהחיינו", they should have in mind that the *bracha* should incorporate RH and the new fruit or the new dress.<sup>15</sup> (If they have a new fruit, they should wait for *kiddush* before eating the fruit). After lighting the candles, one is not allowed to blow out the match.<sup>16</sup> On the second night, setting the table and heating up the food is allowed only after צאת הכוכבים.

## B. BOTH NIGHTS OF RH

### GREETING A FRIEND

When greeting a friend on RH night and up until חצות on the 1st day of RH, one should say "לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם" to a man, and to a woman one says "לשנה טובה תכתבי ותחתמי". After that time, one should only say "חג שמח" or "good Yom Tov".<sup>17</sup> Some have the custom to say "לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם" on the second night as well.<sup>18</sup>

### KIDDUSH

14. Ibid.

13. שו"ע או"ח סימן רסג-ה ומשנ"ב סק"ז

15. שמירת שבת כהלכתה (מז-מד)

16. שו"ע סימן תקיד-א

17. רמ"א סימן תקפג-ט ומשנ"ב שם

18. ט"ז (שם סק"ד)

The *bracha* of "שהחיינו" is recited on both nights of RH. On the second night of RH, one should wear a new garment or place a new fruit on the table before *kiddush*. When reciting the "שהחיינו", one should have in mind that it goes on both RH and the new fruit.<sup>19</sup> One who does not have a new fruit or new garment still recites "שהחיינו" on the second night.<sup>20</sup>



There is a custom based on the גמרא כריתות (ו.) to eat specific fruits and vegetables on RH as an auspicious omen and prayer for the upcoming year.<sup>21</sup> The סימנים are eaten after washing one's hands, reciting המוציא, and eating bread.<sup>22</sup> The ברכת העץ should be recited on a date (since it is from the שבועת המינים and closest to the word "ארץ" in the verse), and if one does not have a date, then it should be recited on a pomegranate.<sup>23</sup> If one does not have either, the ברכת העץ should be recited on the apple. One should say the "יהי רצון" that pertain to each fruit/vegetable with Hashem's name (i.e., "יהי רצון מלפניך אדני-א-לוהינו וא-לוהי אבותינו" ברכת האדמה.<sup>24</sup> With regard to reciting the האדמה, some *poskim* hold that today all the *simanim* are served as part of a meal and one should not recite a *bracha* before eating them.<sup>25</sup> Others write that it is best to recite האדמה on foods that are never eaten as part of the meal, such as a banana or watermelon, and have in mind that it will cover all the other *simanim*.<sup>26</sup> After reciting the ברכת העץ and the האדמה on the first fruit/vegetable that are eaten, one should first swallow a bit and only then recite the "יהי רצון" so that there is no הפסק between

19. הליכות שלמה (פ"א-כ)

20. שו"ע תר-ב

21. שו"ע סימן תקפג

22. הליכות שלמה פ"א סק"ד

23. הליכות שלמה (פ"א-יז)

24. משנ"ב סימן תקפג סק"ב

25. תשובות והנהגות (ח"ב-רסט)

26. Rav Elyashiv in קו עמ' קז (ח"ח עמ' קז)

the *bracha* and the eating.<sup>27</sup> When reciting the *bracha*, one should have in mind that they cover all the other fruits and vegetables of the *סימנים*.<sup>28</sup> Most have the custom to have *סימנים* on the second night of RH as well.<sup>29</sup>

## C. ROSH HASHANA DAY



The Torah teaches us “יום תרועה יהיה לכם”, and the גמרא ראש השנה (לג:) derives that the “תרועה” needs to be heard 3 times, with a תקיעה before and after it each time. Thus, מדאורייתא, one only needs to hear 9 shofar blasts. However, the Gemara is uncertain as to the exact sound that the word “תרועה” is referring to. It is either referring to what we call a תרועה today, what we call a שברים today, or what we call a שברים תרועה today. Therefore, in order to make sure that we are fulfilling our biblical requirement, we blow a שברים (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times, a תרועה (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times, and a שברים תרועה (with a תקיעה before and after it) three times.<sup>30</sup> All of these blasts together total 30 sounds (including the sounds of the תקיעות before and after each “תרועה”). These 30 blasts are blown before the *Mussaf Amidah* and are called דמיושב תקיעות. Another 30 are blown during the *Amidah* and are called תקיעות דמעומד (some locations blow 30 blasts only during חזרת הש”ץ while some blow an additional 30 during the silent *Amidah* as well). There is a custom to blow another 40 (for those who did not blow 30 during the silent *Amidah*) in order to blow a total of 100 blasts on RH.<sup>31</sup>

The congregation and the Shofar blower

should remain standing during the recital of the *bracha* and during all of the actual Shofar blasts.<sup>32</sup> The בעל תוקע recites two blessings before blowing the Shofar: “לשמוע קול שופר” and “שהחינו”. The בעל תוקע should have in mind to be מוציא the congregation, and they should have in mind to be יוצא.<sup>33</sup> The congregation should not answer “ברוך וברוך שמו” to the *bracha* of the בעל תוקע.<sup>34</sup> The *gabbai* should announce that no speaking is allowed until the end of the תקיעות.<sup>35</sup> If you are walking or sitting at home and hear the Shofar blasts from a shul nearby, you fulfill your obligation if you had in mind to be יוצא because the בעל תוקע has in mind to be מוציא all that hear.<sup>36</sup>

If one blows shofar for another individual and one has already fulfilled his obligation, the person being יוצא should recite the ברכות if he/she can.<sup>37</sup> Sephardi women do not recite the *bracha*.<sup>38</sup> One can blow for someone who is in a different room as long as one blows close to that room.<sup>39</sup> If you blows the shofar ביחידות, one should make sure not to blow during the first three hours of the day.<sup>40</sup> Ideally, one who is *davening* ביחידות, such as soldiers on duty, should blow the shofar before *davening Musaf* and *Musaf* should not be *davened* within the first 3 hours (of זמניות) from sunrise,<sup>41</sup> but no later than 7 hours<sup>42</sup> (בדיעבד, *Musaf* can be *davened* after the 7th hour). One who is *davening* ביחידות should time his *Amidah* to begin at the same time as his congregation.<sup>43</sup>

32. שו”ע סימן תקפה-א ומשנ”ב סק”א-ב

33. שו”ע תקפ”ח-ט

34. משנ”ב סימן קכד סק”א

35. שו”ע, תקצב-ג as per אגרו”מ או”ח ח”ב-לו.

36. שו”ע תקפ”ט-ט

37. רמ”א סימן תקפ”ט-ו ומשנ”ב סימן תקפה סק”ה

38. שו”ע תקפ”ט-ו

39. משנ”ב סימן תקפ”ט סק”ז

40. משנ”ב סימן תקצא סק”ו

41. רמ”א סימן תקצב-ב

42. שו”ע סימן תקצא-ח

43. משנ”ב סימן תקצה-סק”ג

44. משנ”ב סימן תקצא-סק”ד

27. משנ”ב סימן תקפ”ג סק”ד

28. הליכות שלמה (פ”א-יח)

29. שו”ע תשובה (תקפ”א)

30. שו”ע סימן תק”צ (א-ב)

31. רמ”א סימן תקצו ומשנ”ב סק”ב

On the second day of RH, *Ashkenazim* recite a "שהחיינו" before blowing shofar, but it is best for the shofar blower to wear a new garment. *Sephardim* do not recite a "שהחיינו".<sup>45</sup>



On the first day of RH after *Mincha* and before *sh'kiya*, there is a custom of performing תשליך, where one goes to a river or other local source of water and recites verses pertaining to תשובה from (זיט) ספר מיכה.<sup>46</sup> There are various reasons for this custom, including the fact that the מדרש teaches that the שטן tried drowning אברהם in a river on the way to the עקידה and we want to remind ourselves of אבינו's determination and devotion<sup>47</sup> (and learn from it). If there is no river nearby, or if one cannot leave the house for whatever reason, he/she can recite it on water in a well<sup>48</sup> or even on a cup of water.<sup>49</sup> ■

45. שו"ע ורמ"א תר-ג ומשנ"ב סק"ז

46. רמ"א תקפג-ב ומשנ"ב סק"ח

47. משנ"ב תקפג סק"ח

48. כף החיים סימן תקפג סק"ל

49. הליכות שלמה (פ"א ארחות הלכה הע' 17)

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