

Hilkhot Rosh Hashanah 5776

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	Sun Sep 13	Mon Sep 14	Tue Sep 15	Wed Sep 16
Is it a Jewish holiday today?	Erev RH	RH I	RH II	Tzom Gedliah
Shacharit	9:00a (<i>hatarat nedarim</i> following)	8:30a	8:30a	7:55a
		Communal Tashlich - 5:30p Yakus Pond ¹ , Massel		
Minha/Ma'ariv	6:30p	6:45p	6:30p	
Candle Lighting	6:41p	after 7:39p	before 7:37p	
Havdala				
Selichot				10:15p
Fast Begins				5:00a
Fast Ends				7:24p

All Services are in Berlin Chapel

Dinners will be in the Lurias. Lunch will be in Sherman. See this page for all the info:
<http://brandeishillel.org/high-holiday-services/>

All halakhic times are FOR WALTHAM, MA ONLY. If you are spending yom tov at home, please consult myzmanim.com or your favorite similar website for local times.

Erev Rosh Hashanah (Sun September 13)

Shofar

We do not blow the Shofar at the conclusion of Shaharit in order to distinguish between the customary (minhag) blowing of the month of Elul and the obligatory blowing of Rosh Hashanah.

Hatarat Nedarim

After minyan on Wednesday morning we will convene *batei din* (lay courts) to administer *hatarat nedarim* (annulment of vows). The optimal time to say this is before Rosh Hashanah, but one has until Yom Kippur to do so.

Mikvah

There is a custom for men to go to the mikvah on *erev Rosh Hashanah* in order to fulfill the dictum of *lifnei Hashem titharu* (purify yourself before God). A number of mikvaot in the area will be open to men, including:

- Daughters of Israel Mikvah, at 101 Washington St., Brighton. 7 am - 1 p.
- The Bostoner Rebbe's shul, Beth Pinchas located at 1710 Beacon St. in Brookline also has a mikvah available for use.
- Chabad of Natick, 159 Boden Lane in Natick, MA

¹ Did you know it was called that?

- Mayyim Hayyim, 1838 Washington Street, Newton, MA. By appointment only.
- Chevrat Nashim, 9 Dunbar St., Sharon, MA. 6:00a - 11:30a

Please call to confirm hours and availability. Also, please be aware that most mikva'ot have a suggested donation for use. Plan on bringing your own towels. To save time, I suggest showering before going to the Mikvah.

First Night of Rosh Hashanah (Sun Sept. 13)

Candle Lighting

The time for lighting candles in Waltham is 6:41p. We recite two *brakhot*:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק של יום טוב
Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-olam Asher kidshanu be-mitzvotav ve-tzivanu lehadlki ne shel Yom Tov.

You are the Source of Blessing, Lord our God Sovereign of the World, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to kindle the light of the holiday.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגעינו לזמן הזה
Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-olam she-hechyanu ve-kiyimanu ve-higyanu la-zman ha-zeh.

You are the Source of Blessing, Lord our God, Sovereign of the World, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

If using real candles (as opposed to electric lights) a 72 hour candle² should be lit as well to enable lighting candles on the second night.

Wednesday night Dinner

The common custom is to use round challahs on Rosh Hashanah and to dip it in honey rather than salt (or in addition to salt).

After saying *ha-motzi* over the challah and eating a bite, it is our custom to eat apples with honey. The proper procedure is to dip a slice of apple in honey, say the *brakha* on the apple (*boreh pri ha-etz*) and take one bite. After the first bite we make the following declaration before eating the rest of the apple:

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקינו ואלקי אבותינו שתחדש עלינו שנה טובה ומתוקה
yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu ve-Elokei avoteinu she-tichadesh aleinu shanah tovah u-metukah.

May it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our ancestors, that you bless us with a good and sweet new year.

There are many other traditions of symbolic foods that we eat; the apple dipped in honey is just the most popular. A partial listing is available in the Rosh Hashanah machzor.

First day of Rosh Hashanah (Sun Sept 14)

Shofar

The essential mitzvah of Rosh Hashanah is to hear the Shofar blasts. We sound the shofar both days of the holiday as part of the davening. Each day we sound a total of 100 blasts. Ideally there should be no talking or interruption between the blessing and the completion of the Shofar at the end of *Musaf*.

Kidush

Before lunch we recite the daytime kidush with the proper insertions for Rosh Hashanah. A halakhic concern that arises on Rosh Hashanah is the fact that many synagogues do not finish services until after *hatzot* (halakhic noon). There is a concern on Shabbat and Yom Tov that we should not spend the majority of the day fasting. There is also may be a problem eating or drinking before fulfilling the mitzvah of shofar. Some shuls have a

² Many people use 24 hour yahrtzeit candles, but these often don't last till candle lighting the second day, and certainly don't last long enough for Shabbat candle lighting. I recommend the 72-hour variety. Or any big candle.

kiddush before mussaf to alleviate the first concern, some do not out of deference to the second concern.

Tashlich

On Monday afternoon we have the custom of saying *tashlich*. *Tashlich* should be said by a live, flowing body of water which has fish living in it. Most poskim feel that one should not throw bread into the water as this might create a halakhic problem with feeding the fish on Yom Tov.

For those who will be on campus, please join us for a communal *tashlich* at 5:30p at Yakus Pond in the Massel Quad.

Second Day of Rosh Hashanah - Thursday evening

Preparation

We are forbidden to prepare on one day of Yom Tov for the next. Thus no preparations for dinner should take place until after 7:39p.

Candle Lighting

Candles should be lit from an existing flame after the stars come out (7:39p). Once again we recite two blessings on the candles:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב
*baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-Olam Asher kidshanu be-mitzvotav
ve-tzivanu lehadlik ner shel yom tov*

Blessed are You Lord our God, Sovereign of the world, Who has sanctified with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the light of the festival.

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם שהחיינו וקיימנו והגעינו לזמן הזה
*Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-olam she-hechyanu ve-kiymanu
ve-higyanu la-zman ha-zeh.*

Blessed are You Lord our God, sovereign of the world, Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season

When reciting *she-hechyanu* we should have in mind the new fruit that we will eat during the meal (see below).

Like the first night, the custom is to eat apples and honey immediately after the Challah (see above for a full explanation).

In addition to the apples and honey, we also have the custom to eat a new fruit at dinner on the second night of Rosh Hashanah. This removes any halakhic difficulties with saying *She-hechyanu* as part of the candle lighting or kiddush.³

The day is otherwise a repeat of the first day: shofar, kiddush etc. When the machzor offers you the option, choose the liturgy for second day.

Napping

There is a tradition not to nap on Rosh Hashanah. The reason is that it is inappropriate to fall asleep when we are being judged and our fate is being sealed.

While this minhag has much meaning and significance, it should be balanced with the imperative to enjoy Yom Tov and pray with enough energy.

Cooking on Yom Tov

On Yom Tov we are permitted to perform certain activities that we can't do on Shabbat if they fall under the category of *ochel nefesh* (things that are beneficial to the soul, ie soul food⁴). This broad category includes cooking and preparing food for the Chag, carrying, and other activities. One may cook on Yom Tov with the following restrictions:

³ The second day of RH may be unlike most second days. It may be considered two independent days, or one very long day. Therefore, there is a doubt whether or not to say she-hechyanu on the second eve. Therefore, having a fruit that you have not eaten in a full season alleviates the concern of a brakha said in vain. If you cannot acquire a fruit, or anything else new, you should make the brakha anyway.

⁴ ie not soul food, that was just a joke.

- One cannot create a new flame, but must use a fire that was lit before Yom Tov. Similarly, one cannot extinguish a flame on Yom Tov.
- One CAN adjust the temperature on an oven or stove as long as there is not digital temperature display or other lights that will be turned on or be adjusted when changing the temperature. Electric stoves in which the heating element turns red when active are also problematic - please consult with a rabbi before using such stoves. Provided one's oven and/or stovetop meet these criteria, it is recommended to leave it on at a low temperature before the start of Yom Tov, and to increase the temperature when cooking. Once the food item is finished, you may reduce the flame to low while the food is still on the flame, in order to prevent burning the food. **Extreme care should be taken to prevent fires and accidental burns.**
- One can only prepare food for that day of Yom Tov. It is not permitted to cook on the afternoon of the first day for the next day's meals. If there happen to be leftovers, they can be eaten on the following day.

Showering on Yom Tov

Some poskim feel that showering on Yom Tov is permitted by the principle of *ochel nefesh* (things that are beneficial to the soul) *if* a person feels particularly dirty from not having showered. If one decides that he/she needs to shower on Yom Tov, the following guidelines must be followed:

- One should shower in order to clean themselves and not take an overly long or luxurious shower.
- One may not use bar soap as this presents a separate problem of *memareach* (smoothing out the soap)
- One should not use a washcloth in order to avoid problems of *sechitah* (squeezing out the water from the washcloth)
- One must also be very careful not to squeeze out their hair for the same concern.
- Ideally, one should drip dry after the shower in order to avoid squeezing out the towel. If one exercises extreme caution they can pat themselves dry with a towel.

Aseret Yemei Teshuvah (The Ten Days of Repentance)

The time between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is known as the ten days of repentance. Tradition tells us that those whose fate was not sealed on Rosh Hashanah (*beinonim*) hang in limbo until they are judged on Yom Kippur, and that every one of us should see ourselves as being a *beinoni*. In this light, many have the custom of taking on extra stringencies on themselves in order to develop a pattern of more meticulous religious observance. It is also customary to learn works of Mussar or inspiring works of Teshuvah in this time period and to give Tzedakah.

Tzom Gedaliah

Tzom Gedaliah (the fast of Gedaliah) is on Wednesday September 16. On this day we commemorate the assassination of Gedaliah ben Achikam, the last Jewish autonomous leader after the Babylonian conquest of the land of Israel. The fast begins at 5:00a and concludes at 7:24p

About fasting: some people wake up early to eat before 5:00a to make the fast easier. If one does this, they must verbalize a condition *before falling asleep* that they are not accepting the fast upon themselves. However, it's the Rabbi's personal opinion that this doesn't actually make fasting easier, but that part is up to you.

Selichot

We continue to say *selichot* during the *aseret yemei Teshuvah* (10 days of repentance) leading up to Yom Kippur.

Liturgical Additions

We make several additions/insertions in the davening during the *aseret yemei teshuvah*, including:

- We recite Psalm 121 between *Yishtabach* and the Half *Kadish* of *Shacharit*
- We say *Avinu Malkeinu* after the *amidah* at *Shacharit* and *Minchah*
- Several additions are made in the *amidah* including:
 - *Zachreinu le-chaim...*
 - *Mi chamocho Av ha-rachamim*
 - *Ha-Melech ha-Kadosh*
 - *Ha-Melech ha-Mishpat*
 - *U'chetov lechayim tovim...*
 - *Be-sefer chaim*
- In the *Kadish* we say *le-eilah u'le-eilah*
- We continue to say Psalm 27 (*L'David Hashem Ori*) at the conclusion of *Shacharit* and *Ma'ariv* but we no longer blow the *Shofar*.