

ELUL

The *Molad*: Tuesday morning,
10:44 and 15 portions.

The moon may be sanctified
throughout Tuesday night, the 15th.

The first day of Rosh Chodesh is on Tuesday.

On this day, we begin reciting Psalm 27, *L'David ori*, after the Song of the Day in the **Morning Service** and before *Aleinu* in the **Afternoon Service**. (We continue this practice until, and including, *Hoshaana Rabbah*.) Our custom is to recite only one *Kaddish* after all the Psalms (i.e., the Song of the Day, *L'David ori*, and also the Psalm *Barchi nafshi*) are recited. Similarly, in the Afternoon Service, only one *Kaddish* is recited after *L'David ori* and *Aleinu*.

During this day, the *shofar* is sounded for practice.

The second day of Rosh Chodesh is on Wednesday.

Every day of this month, we sound the *shofar* at the end of the Morning Service, with the exception of Shabbos and the day preceding Rosh HaShanah. Our custom is to sound the series of *tekiab-shevarim-teruah-tekiab* blasts, then the series *tekiab-shevarim-tekiab*, and then the series *tekiab-teruah-tekiab*.

From the second day of Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur, in addition to the daily recitation of Psalms according to the monthly cycle, we recite three extra Psalms each day (on the first day, Psalms 1-3; on the second, 4-6; etc.). On Yom Kippur itself, we complete the *T'hillim*, reciting 36 extra Psalms: 9 before *Kol Nidrei*, 9 before going to sleep, 9 after *Mussaf*, and 9 after *N'ilah*.

If a person did not start this practice on the second day of Rosh Chodesh, he should start on the day he remembers and then make up for the previous days.¹

People who are precise in their observance of the *mitzvos* have their *t'fillin* and *mezuzos* checked during this month, and review carefully their observance of the Torah and its *mitzvos*, correcting any flaws in their conduct.

Elul 4, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim.

1. *HaYom Yom*, Elul 1.

We recite the first chapter of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

Elul 11, Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei.

The Rebbe instructed that, when reading the concluding verse of the *Parshah* (*D'varim* 25:19) and in the *Maftir*, the word זכר from the phrase זכר עמלק should be read twice: first with a *tzeirei* (*zeicher*) and then with a *segol* (*zecher*).

The Alter Rebbe instructed that the word דכא (*D'varim* 23:2) in the Torah scroll should be written with an *alef* at the end, not with a *bei*.²

We recite the second chapter of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

Elul 15, Wednesday.

This day marks the **120th** anniversary of the founding of *Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim*, the Central Lubavitcher *Yeshivah*, in Lubavitch, in 5657 (1897). The actual studying of *Nigleh* and *Chassidus* began on the 18th of Elul 5657 (1897).

Elul 18, Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo.

In the Torah reading, it is customary for the reader to raise his voice slightly when reading the verse (*D'varim* 26:15) *Hashkifah mim'on kodsh'cha*.³

For the sixth *aliyah*, the reader ascends to the Torah without being called. He recites the blessings before and after the Torah reading.

We recite the third and fourth chapters of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

Chai Elul.

This day marks the birthday of “the two great luminaries,” the **Baal Shem Tov** in 5458 (1698) and the **Alter Rebbe** in 5505 (1745).⁴

Elul 25, Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech.

We read the *Haftorah* beginning *Sos asis* (*Y'shayahu* 61:10-63:9).

We recite *T'hillim* as is customary every Shabbos *M'varchim*, but do not bless the new month.

(The **Alter Rebbe** said in the name of the **Baal Shem Tov**: “Tishrei is blessed by the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself. And with the power of this

2. *Sefer HaMinbagim*, p. 62.

3. See *Talmud Y'rushalmi*, *Maaser Sheni* 5:9.

4. *Sefer HaSichos* 5703, p. 188.

blessing, the Jews bless the other eleven months of the year.”⁵)

We recite the passage *Av barachamim*.⁶

We recite the fifth and sixth chapters of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

On Motzaei Shabbos, we do not say *Vibi noam* and *V'Atah kadosh*.

We begin the recitation of *S'lichos*. On Motzaei Shabbos itself, the *S'lichos* are recited directly after halachic midnight. (Please check your local calendar.) On the subsequent days of the week, they are recited shortly before dawn or in the early hours of the morning.

When rising to say *S'lichos* before dawn, one should recite the **Morning Blessings** and the blessing of the Torah. A person should not recite the blessing *Hanosein lasechvi...* unless he actually hears a rooster crow. Nor should he recite the blessing *She'asah li kol tzorki* unless he wears leather shoes. After daybreak, however, these blessings should be recited.

The *chazan* recites *S'lichos* while robed in a *tallis*. At night and before dawn, he should not, however, recite a blessing when putting it on. The *S'lichos* prayers begin with *Ashrei* and a half-*Kaddish*, and then follow the prescribed order. We recite the confessional prayer (*Ashamnu*) only once. We do not prostrate ourselves when reciting the passage *Vayomer David el Gad*. We say a full *Kaddish* with *Tiskabel*. See also the section concerning the Fast of Gedaliah (Tishrei 3), where these laws are described.

When a person recites *S'lichos* without a *minyan*, he should not recite the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, nor should he recite any of the hymns written in Aramaic, e.g., *Machei u'masei*.

There are many who follow the custom of fasting on the first day of *S'lichos*.

Elul 29, Wednesday, Erev Rosh HaShanah 5778.

This day marks the birthday of the *Tzemach Tzedek*, **Rabbi Menachem Mendel**, in 5549 (1789).

On this day, even a person in the seven days of the

5. *HaYom Yom*, Elul 25.

6. See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech* 5750, sec. 10.

shivah mourning may attend the synagogue to recite *S'lichos*. The *Tachanun* supplications are recited in *S'lichos*, but not in the Morning or Afternoon Services. The *shofar* is not sounded.

After the **Morning Service**, we perform *hataras nedarim*, the release of vows. This should preferably be performed in the presence of a quorum of 10. It is necessary to understand the words one is reading. A person who does not understand the Hebrew should read the passage in his native tongue. (We do not recite the *Seder Nezifah*.)

There are many people who fast on this day. If, however, they encounter a feast associated with a *mitzvah*, they may take part and eat. It is not necessary for them to have this vow released.

We cut our hair and go to the *mikveh*.

The Rebbe initiated the practice of assisting the needy with the extra expenses for all the festivals of the month of Tishrei.⁷

Since Rosh HaShanah is celebrated on Thursday and Friday, it is necessary to prepare an *eruv tavshilin* beforehand. This is done by taking a *k'beitzah*⁸ of *challah*, and a *k'zayis*⁹ of cooked or roasted food that is appropriate to be served as a main dish. It is preferable to take an important cooked dish, e.g., meat or fish. One should then recite the blessing *Al mitzvas eruv*. He then recites the paragraph beginning *B'dein y'hei shara* (*Siddur Tehillas Hashem*, p. 249). This passage is written in Aramaic; if a person does not understand the Aramaic, he should recite it in a language that he does understand.

When one desires to include others with him for this *eruv*, he should first give the *challah* and the food to another person, then that person should lift them up a handbreadth, and then the person making the *eruv* should take it back and recite the blessing and the paragraph mentioned above.

After one has made an *eruv*, it is permissible for them to cook food for Shabbos on Friday, the second day of Rosh HaShanah. One must, however, cook

7. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. XIV, p. 369ff.

8. Approximately two ounces.

9. Approximately one ounce.

this food well before nightfall, so that it is possible for one to benefit from the food on the festival itself. If one is putting the food in an oven or the like to cook slowly, he must put it away in a manner that it will be at least one-third cooked before nightfall.

The food designated for the *eruv* must continue to exist until one completes cooking.

It is customary to use an entire *challah* for the *eruv*. This *challah* is then used on Shabbos as *lechem mishneh*, and is eaten for the third Shabbos meal.

If a person forgot to make an *eruv* during the day, he can make one *bein hash'mashos*.¹⁰ If he forgot at that time as well, he may not make an *eruv* on the first day of Rosh HaShanah, and should ask a competent Rabbinic authority for guidance.

Before the evening, we put on our festive garments, confident that G-d will miraculously favor us in judgment and look upon us with the attribute of mercy. He alone judges all created beings.

L'shanah Tovah Nikaseiv V'neichaseim. May we all be inscribed and sealed for a good year, with abundant material and spiritual blessings, including the greatest blessing, the coming of *Moshiach*. Amen!



10. The time between sunset and the appearance of the stars.