

ELUL

The *Molad*: Shabbos evening,
7:33 and 9 portions.

The moon may be sanctified until
Sunday, the 15th, 1:55 p.m.¹

The first day of Rosh Chodesh is on Shabbos Parshas R'eh.

The laws regarding Shabbos Rosh Chodesh are explained in the section on Shabbos Parshas Noach.

We recite the *Haftorah* for Shabbos Rosh Chodesh (*Y'shayahu*, chapter 66), and we then add the first and last verses of the *Haftorah Machar chodesh* (*I Shmuel* 20:18 and 42).

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 Mourner's *Kaddish* after all the psalms (i.e., the Song of the Day, *L'David ori*, and *Barchi nafshi*) are recited. Similarly, in the Afternoon Service, only one Mourner's *Kaddish* is recited after *L'David ori* and *Aleinu*.

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

The second day of Rosh Chodesh is on Sunday.

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'hilim*, reciting 36 extra psalms: 9

1. **The times for sanctifying the moon are based on Jerusalem Standard Time.** One should therefore calculate the time for sanctifying the moon according to his location.

before *Kol Nidrei*, 9 before going to sleep, 9 after *Mussaf*, and 9 after *N'ilab*.

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.²

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 7, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim.

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

Elul 14, Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei.

The Rebbe instructed that when reading the concluding verse of the *Parshah* (*D'varim* 25:19) and when repeating it in *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*.³)

For the *Haftorah*, we read *Rani akarah* and *Aniyah so'arah* (*Y'shayahu* 54:1-17, 55:1-5).

We recite the first and second chapters of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

Elul 15, Sunday.

This day marks the 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, Wednesday, 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 20, Friday.

We complete the annual cycle of *Rambam's Mishneh Torah*, as ordained by The Rebbe, three chapters per day, for the **37th** time.

2. *HaYom Yom*, Elul 1.

3. *Sefer HaMinbagim*, p. 62.

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

Elul 21, 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*.⁵

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.

We begin the recitation of *S'lichos*.

On Motzaei Shabbos itself, the *S'lichos* are recited immediately 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'asab 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 4), 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*.

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

Elul 28, Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim.

Both the seventh *aliyah* and the *Maftir* begin at *D'varim* 30:15.

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 blessing, the Jews bless the other eleven months of the year."⁶)

We recite the passage *Av harachamim*.⁷

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'Atab kadosh*.

Elul 29, Sunday, Erev Rosh HaShanah 5779.

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 *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 *mikvah*.

The Rebbe initiated the practice of assisting the needy with the extra expenses for all the festivals of the month of Tishrei.⁸

6. *HaYom Yom*, Elul 25.

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

8. See *Likkutei Sichos*, Vol. XIV, pp. 369ff.

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!

