

# SAMCHAINU GUIDE TO THE HALACHOS OF ROSH HASHANA

A SELECTION OF LAWS & CUSTOMS WITH A FOCUS ON SINGLE MOTHER FAMILIES

*Reviewed by Rabbi Yosef Eisen Shlit"א*



The *של"ה הקדוש* writes that learning and properly observing the Halachos of a חג infuse the Yom Tov with tremendous Bracha. Please note that the Halachos and Minhagim contained in this article follow the custom of בני אשכנז.

## ליל ראש השנה

A woman who is making קידוש should omit the ברכה of שהחיינו, since she already said it when she lit candles.

Before the Seudah on Rosh Hashanah night, there is a מנהג is to bentsh each other. "לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם" is said to a man/ boy and "לשנה טובה תכתבי ותחתמי" is said to a woman/ girl.

Although Rosh Hashanah is a serious day and a יום הדין, it is also a Yom Tov, and the mitzvah of שמחת יום טוב still applies. Therefore we eat, drink and have enjoyable meals. By doing so, we show our confidence in Hashem's חסד that we will be זוכה to a שנה טובה ומתוקה. However, it is best not to wear very elaborate clothing because it is indeed a יום הדין.

There is a minhag to dip the challah in honey after the bracha of Hamotzi. Opinions vary regarding whether the Challah should be dipped in salt as well, as during the rest of the year.

## סימנים טובים

There is a minhag to eat an apple dipped in honey for a סימן טוב. Although we already made Hamotzei, the apple is not considered part of the meal, and requires its own ברכה of העץ. The same applies to the other fruits as well. (One bracha of העץ is sufficient for all fruits.) סימנים that would be served as part of a meal (i.e. carrots, fish) do not require a bracha.

The widely followed minhag is to begin the סימנים with the apple dipped in honey. It is preferable that שבעת המינים fruits not be out on the table while making the Bracha on the apple. (This is due to the הלכה that grants precedence to the שבעת המינים over other fruits.) Among the שבעת המינים, a date has precedence over a pomegranate. Therefore, if you have no preference regarding which סימן to begin with, some פוסקים say to begin with a date.

When a סימן requires a Bracha, first say the Bracha and then eat from the fruit. After eating some of the fruit, then the יהי רצון is said. This is in order to avoid a hefsek between the Bracha and eating the food. When eating סימנים that do not require a ברכה, (i.e. the Bracha was already said on a previous food, or a food that is part of the meal) then the יהי רצון should be said prior to eating the food.

There is a minhag brought down by the Rema to avoid eating nuts on ראש השנה. One reason given is that אגוז (nut) is the numerical value of חטא (sin).

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## הדלקת נרות בליל שני של יום טוב

When lighting candles on the second night of Yom Tov, a woman should try to either wear a new garment, or to have a new **שהחיינו** fruit out on the table. While making the **ברכה** of **שהחיינו** during candle lighting, she should have in mind the new garment or fruit. If this is not possible, she should say the **ברכה** of **שהחיינו** anyways.

## עשרת ימי תשובה

Beginning with **ראש השנה** and lasting thorough **יום כיפור** are ten days otherwise known as the **עשרת ימי תשובה**. During this time there are some important changes in our **שמונה עשרה**.

- Instead of referring to **הקב"ה** as "**האל הקדוש**" (at the end of the third bracha in **שמונה עשרה**) we say "**המלך הקדוש**". If you forget or are in doubt if this change was made, you must restart **שמונה עשרה**, since the important insertion of Hashem's Kingship was omitted. However, if you remember to say "**המלך הקדוש**" within the time it takes to say three words from making the omission, you can then say "**המלך הקדוש**" (as long as you did not yet start the next **ברכה**).
- In the **ברכה** of **השיבה שפטינו**, we end the bracha with "**המלך המשפט**" instead of "**מלך אוהב צדקה ומשפט**". If you accidentally forget "**המלך המשפט**", you do not need to go back and repeat **שמונה עשרה** (since you already mentioned Hashem's **מלכות**). However, if you remember immediately after you said the word "**המשפט**", you should then say "**המלך המשפט**".

In addition to the above two changes, there are several additions to **שמונה עשרה** during this period.

- Add "**וזכרינו לחיים**" in the first bracha of **שמונה עשרה**
- Add "**וכתוב לחיים**" after **מודים**
- Add "**מי כמוך**" in the second bracha of **שמונה עשרה**
- Add "**בספר חיים**" in the bracha of **שים שלום**

Since these additions were added to the **תפילה** later, (during the time of the **גאונים**) you do not need to repeat **שמונה עשרה** if forgotten. However, if you did not yet say the name of Hashem, say the addition and continue davening.

**אבינו מלכינו** is said during **שחרית** and **מנחה**, after **שמונה עשרה**, on every day of **עשרת ימי תשובה** (except Shabbos).

During **עשרת ימי תשובה** we are stringent to only eat **פת ישראל** (bread made by a Jew), even if during the year you are not **makpid** on this. There are different opinions regarding cakes, pretzels, cookies and other baked goods. Since there is a vast array of **פת ישראל** products available on the market today, it is praiseworthy to be **מקפיד** on these products as well.