

**LAWS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE HIGH HOLIDAYS
(ACCORDING TO SEPHARDIC TRADITION)
5782 – SEPTEMBER 2021**

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah will be Monday evening Sept 6th, through Wednesday, Sept 8th.

Kiddush and Extra Berachot

Both nights we partake of various fruits and vegetables after Hamotzi immediately before the meal. It is best to recite the Beracha and eat a piece of fruit. Then, say the Yehi Rasson and eat some more of the fruit. You should dip the piece of Hamotzi in sugar or honey on Rosh Hashanah. However, you should also dip the bread in a little salt as usual.

Most communities have the following fruits and vegetable at their table (in this order): dates, black eyed peas, leeks, Swiss chard, gourd, pomegranate, and apple. It is also customary to eat a piece of animal or fish head, and also some eat a piece of the lungs. The prayers for these foods can be found in the Holiday Prayer Books.

Tashlich

The process of going to a pool of water on the first day of Rosh Hashanah when we symbolically cast away our sins is called Tashlich. If you failed to go to Tashlich you may do so on any of the Ten Days of Repentance.

Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur is on Wednesday evening, Sept 15th, thru Wed evening, Sept 16th.

Kapparot

The Kapparot is done between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur on live chickens for all the members of the family, including the children. If one cannot find a chicken, he may use money instead and wave it over his head and give the money to a worthy cause.

Special Meals

There is an obligation to have at least one meal on the Eve of Yom Kippur. Some have the custom to eat two meals with bread, one in the morning and the second in the afternoon before the fast. It is proper to pray Minha before having the last meal.

Forgiving

On the eve of Yom Kippur, one should ask forgiveness from one's parents and kiss their hands. Husbands and wives should forgive one another. A student should ask forgiveness from his Rabbi. Likewise all fellow Jews should forgive one another.

Candle Lighting

Once a woman lights the candles for the holiday, it is forbidden for her to do any work, and she must keep all of the five restrictions of Yom Kippur. Other members of the household are permitted to work, eat, wear leather shoes, wash and use ointments until sunset. It is praiseworthy, however, to start Yom Kippur early. (You should stop eating at least 10 minutes before sunset). It is customary to light memorial candles for deceased parents.

Wearing the Tallit

Men should come to the synagogue early before sunset on the eve of Yom Kippur in order to make the blessing on the Tallit, which is worn throughout all the prayers of Yom Kippur. If someone comes late, he can still wear the Tallit but without the blessing since this blessing is not recited at night.

Day of Yom Kippur

Besides the prohibition of doing work such as cooking, writing, carrying and lighting (just like Shabbat) there are five additional restrictions on this day:

1. Eating and Drinking
2. Washing and Bathing
3. Smearing of ointments and perfumes
4. Wearing leather shoes
5. Marital Relations

Eating and Drinking

Men and women (even those who are pregnant or have recently given birth) must fast on

Yom Kippur. A nine year old, healthy child should be trained to fast for a few hours in the morning. A child should not fast the entire day. At the age of eleven, a healthy child may fast the entire day if they so choose. At the age of 13 years for a boy and 12 year for a girl, they are obligated to fast like any other adult. If someone is very sick, or is on medication, a Rabbi should be consulted.

Washing and Bathing

It is forbidden to take a hot or cold shower on Yom Kippur. Even to place a finger in water is not allowed. To wash one's face on the morning of Yom Kippur is forbidden. A person should not rinse his mouth with even a little water on Yom Kippur. When rising in the morning, one is permitted to wash his hands three times as during the year, however the water may only reach up to the end of the knuckles. After drying them, if the hands are still moist, one may pass them over the eyes. It is forbidden to wash, bathe or anoint children. Washing off dirt is permitted, since this is not washing for pleasure. Cohanim, who are going up to bless the congregation, should wash their hands till the wrist.

Non-leather Shoes

It is forbidden to wear leather shoes on Yom Kippur. This, like all the other laws of Yom Kippur, applies to women as well. Children by the age of six or seven should be trained to wear non-leather shoes. Shoes made from wood or cloth are permitted. Sneakers are permitted as long as they are not made from leather. One may stand on a leather carpet, sit on a leather chair or wear a leather belt.

Tizku Leshanim Rabot

Laws of Succot 5782 (2021)

The holiday of Succot begins Monday evening Sept 20th, and continues through Wednesday, Sept 29th, concluding with Simchat Torah.

Dwelling and Usage of the Succah

The Succah should be our main dwelling throughout the eight days of Succot.

The general rule is to stand for the Kiddush of the night and sit for the Kiddush of the day. However, on Succot, it is best to stand for the Kiddush of the night and day so that the beracha of *Leshev BaSuccah* is recited prior to sitting and drinking the wine.

On the first and second night of Succot one is obligated to eat at least an ounce of bread

in the Succah. This amount of bread should be eaten within a time span of four minutes. Even if it is raining, one must eat this amount in the Succah. However, the meal can be continued in the house. The Beracha of *Leshev BaSuccah* is omitted since it is raining.

Lulab, Etrog, Hadas and Araba

One is obligated to hold one lulab, three hadassim, two arabot, and one etrog every day of Succot. The lulab, three hadassim, and two arabot should be tied together and held in the right hand. The etrog is held in the left hand.

The beracha must be recited before fulfilling the Mitzvah. Therefore, before making the beracha, one should hold only the lulab bundle in his right hand. Only after reciting the beracha should he pick up the Etrog in his left hand. As a second choice he may hold the etrog upside down with the stem up before the beracha, and after the berachot, turn it right side.

On Shabbat Succot, there is no mitzvah to hold the "mitzvah set." Furthermore they are forbidden to be handled and moved.

Hoshana Rabba

Hoshana Rabba marks the last days of Succot. It is traditionally accepted that the heavenly decree of Yom Kippur is finalized on this day. Therefore, we have the custom to remain awake all night. This year it will occur on Sunday night Sept 26th.

After morning prayers, one should hold five kosher arabot tied together and beat them on the ground five times.

Shemini Atzeret

The eighth day of the Holiday is the day of "atzeret - preservation". HaShem asks his nation to remain a little longer to celebrate the joy of the festival in closeness with Him. Starting from Musaf on this day until Pesach, we say "*Mashib Ha'Ruah U'Morid HaGeshem*" in the prayers. No lulab is held on this day, but we sit in the Succah.

Simchat Torah

**PLEASE COME AND JOIN THE SEPHARDIC COMMUNITY IN AN
UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT AND DAY OF SIMCHAT TORAH.**

HAG SAMEAH!