

Overview

Siman 581 Seif 1 (a):

The custom is to rise early in the morning to say *selichos* and supplications from Rosh Chodesh Elul and onwards until Yom HaKippurim. The custom of people of Ashkenaz is not like this; rather from Rosh Chodesh and onwards we begin to blow the *shofar* after *shacharis*. There are some places that blow the *shofar* after *ma'ariv*. We rise early in the morning to say *selichos* from the Sunday before Rosh HaShanah and if Rosh HaShanah begins Monday or Tuesday we begin on the previous Sunday. A mourner is prohibited to leave his house to go to the Bais HaKnesses to hear *selichos*. The exception is on *erev* Rosh HaShanah when there are numerous *selichos*, the mourner is permitted to go to the *Bais Haknesses*.

- ❖ At the end of the night Hashem flies through the world making it an auspicious time for *davening*. During the forty days from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur *teshuvah* is more readily received.
- ❖ *Selichos* and supplications are not recited on Rosh Chodesh. (M.B. 1)
- ❖ There is a custom to say *לדור ה' אורי* from Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur but our custom is to read it through Shemini Atzeres. It is recited in the morning and evening followed by *kaddish*. As far as where in *davening* it is recited depends on custom. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ Some begin *shofar* blowing on the first day of Rosh Chodesh and other places begin on the second day. The *shofar* is sounded each day after *shacharis*. (M.B. 3)
- ❖ There is a custom to read ten chapters of Tehillim each weekday during Elul and to read a greater number during *aseres yimei teshuvah* to allow one to complete Tehillim a third time before Yom Kippur. (M.B. 3)
- ❖ An individual may also say *selichos* but may not read the thirteen attributes of mercy or sections in Aramaic. *Selichos* should begin with *א-לוקינו וא-לוקינו* unless it anyways begins with Hashem's name. In the phrase *ויקרא בשם ה'* one should pause in between the words *בשם* and *ה'*. It is permitted to begin *selichos* without a *minyan* and then read *kaddish* afterwards and there is a dispute whether it is necessary to read three *pesukim* before beginning *kaddish*. (M.B. 4)
- ❖ The *shaliach tzibbur* puts on a *talis* even if it is early in the morning but does not recite the *beracha*. Taz contends that one should borrow a friend's *talis* and have in mind not to acquire it in order to avoid issues related to reciting the *beracha*. (M.B. 6)
- ❖ Although a mourner may not serve as *shaliach tzibbur* for the Yomim Noraim he may lead *davening* for *selichos*. (M.B. 7)

Stories to Share

Early to Rise

ש"י עי תקפ"א, א': "נוהגים לקום באשמרת לומר סליחות..."

Today's amud discusses waking up early for *selichos*. Of course we must avoid causing harm to our household and neighbors even when we are waking up early for a holy purpose. This is one of the main lessons taught by Rav Yisrael Salanter, zt"l; we must always determine if our actions are causing damage to others, and to avoid this if we find that it is so.

Rav Yisrael would remonstrate against causing harm when preparing for *selichos*. "When a person wakes up early to say *selichos*, he often feels great zeal. But if he is not careful, he rushes to get dressed

Halacha Highlight

Blowing the *shofar* during the month of Elul

Rema Siman 581 Seif 1 (a)

אלא מראש חודש ואילך מתחילין לתקע אחר התפלה שחרית

Rather from Rosh Chodesh and onwards we begin to blow the *shofar* after *shacharis*.

Rema mentions that beginning with Rosh Chodesh Elul we blow the *shofar* after *shacharis*, and there are some places that blow the *shofar* at night as well. Mishnah Berurah (סק"ג) relates that there are two customs when to start blowing the *shofar*. Some communities begin blowing the *shofar* on the first day of Rosh Chodesh even though it is the 30th of Av and others begin blowing the *shofar* on the second day of Rosh Chodesh, which is the 1st of Elul. Rav Moshe Feinstein (שו"ת אג"מ א"ח ח"ד סי' כ"א אות ה') rules that if a community does not have an established custom they should begin blowing the *shofar* on the 2nd day of Rosh Chodesh. Tur presents two reasons for the practice of blowing the *shofar* during Elul. One reason is to awaken the people to do *teshuvah* and the second reason is to confuse the Satan so that he should not know when is Rosh HaShanah.

Bach (סוף סימן תקצ"ב) relates that Aruch maintains that when blowing the *shofar* for the *tzibbur* one should not blow less than a full set of ten blasts (תשרית תשרית) out of fear that if someone blows only four blasts (תשרית) people may mistakenly think that these four blasts constitute the *mitzvah* of blowing *shofar*. Accordingly, when blowing the *shofar* during Elul one should also blow a full set of ten blasts. Bach notes that common custom does not follow this opinion and a single set of four blasts is all that is blown. Teshuvos Tzitz Eliezer (ח"ב סי' מ"ח) writes that the practice of blowing *shofar* during the month of Elul is an obligation that rests upon the *tzibbur* but someone who *davens* by himself is not obligated to blow *shofar* when he is done *davening*. Rav Feinstein (ה"י"ל) rules that if for some reason a *tzibbur* did not blow the *shofar* after *shacharis* it should be blown after *mincha*.

and wakes his wife and family—and possibly even his neighbors—at this early hour. Sometimes his carelessness awakens children or sick people and caused them exceptional emotional and physical pain.

(Rav Yisrael held that גזל שניה is a Torah prohibition. Although some question this, the Shut Keren L'Dovid points out that he certainly violates the Torah prohibition against causing another pain).

שו"ת קרן לדוד, א"ח, סי' י"ח

Many people feel a need for a hot drink and wake their housekeeper to prepare it for them. If she is an orphan or widow as is often the case, this is an even more serious transgression. At this point one notices that he is a bit late and rushes to shul, quickly spilling whatever is leftover from his drink in the street—thereby creating a bor b'reshus harabim!

He would continue, "When the person finally gets to shul he may find that his shtender is not in its place and start to scream at the blameless shamash of the shul—after all, he is tired! In this manner, he has of course violated the prohibitions forbidding lashon hara and publicly embarrassing a fellow Jew. When he finally finds that someone else was using his shtender, he screams at him in public, not realizing that this person is a talmid chacham who has been learning all night. Of course this compounds the above prohibitions since now he has publicly shamed a talmid chacham.

"After *selichos* he likely feels pleased with himself. But it would have been better had he stayed in bed!