

Halachos of Daily Living

Is there a *bracha* that should be recited on a hurricane?

Yes. Shulchan Aruch (OC 227:1) writes one may recite either *Oseh Maasay Bereishis* or *Shekocho Ugvuroso Molay Olom* for thunder, lightning or “great winds that blow with rage”. Common practice is to recite *Oseh Maasay Bereishis* for lightning (this *bracha* speaks of the wonders of creation), and *Shekocho Ugvuroso Molay Olom* for thunder (this *bracha* refers to the awesome power of *Hashem*) [Mishna Berura 227:5]. The Mishna Berura also writes that the blessing of *Shekocho Ugvuroso Molay Olom* - “That His power and strength fills the world” is only said on a wind that howls with such intensity that it can be heard across the world (until the horizon) similar to thunder. Since we are not proficient in delineating what exactly is a “wind that blows with rage”, we do not recite this blessing. Instead, we recite the blessing of *Oseh Maasay Bereishis*. Although a hurricane would seemingly qualify as “a wind that blows with rage” the custom is to avoid the issue by always reciting *Oseh Maasay Bereishis* which can be recited on any dangerous gust of wind.