



Guidelines for Observing Tisha B'Av / The 9th of Av

Saturday, July 17 - Sunday, 18, 2021

EREV TISHA B'AV (Saturday Afternoon) — It is customary to eat a final meal after Mincha and before sunset. Many treat this meal like the meal of a shiva house. One eats cold hard-boiled eggs. Some also eat while seated low or on the ground. Many have the tradition to dip a portion of bread in ashes in memory of Jerusalem.

EATING & DRINKING — **After 8:13pm Saturday, July 17**, all eating and drinking is forbidden. This includes rinsing the mouth and brushing teeth, except in a case of great distress. Swallowing medicinal capsules, tablets or liquid medicine without water **is definitely permitted**. The ill or elderly, as well as pregnant and nursing women, are required to fast if strong and healthy, or unless a doctor says they may not. Boys up to twelve years old and girls up to eleven are **not required to fast the entire day**. Those not required to fast should eat only what is needed to preserve their health.

BATHING & WASHING — All bathing for pleasure is prohibited, even in cold water, including the hands, face, and feet. Washing upon waking, after using the bathroom, or before praying **is permitted**. One may wash dirty or sullied portions of the body (including cleaning the eyes), and if necessary, may use soap or warm water to remove dirt or odors. **Washing for cooking or for medical reasons is permitted**.

ANOINTING — The use of fragrances, alcohols, creams, ointments, perfumes, etc. are **not permitted**. If any of the above are used for medical reasons they are permitted.

MARITAL RELATIONS — Spousal intimacy is **not** permitted on Tisha B'Av.

WEARING LEATHER SHOES — Wearing leather shoes is prohibited. Shoes made of cloth, rubber or plastic are permitted. Many people do not wear any leather, including that which is merely adornments or decorative (such as belts, kippot, or leather accents on athletic shoes).



LEARNING TORAH — Since the study of Torah is consoling, it is prohibited to learn topics other than those relevant to Tisha B'Av or mourning. For example, one may learn Lamentations with Midrash and commentaries that deal with tragedy or destruction, the third chapter of Moed Katan (which deals with mourning), the story of the destruction (in Gittin 56b-58a, Sanhedrin 104 and in Josephus), and the halachot of Tisha B'Av and mourning.

ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS — Many people try to express the grief of the day by depriving themselves of some comfort in sleep; some reduce the number of pillows while others sleep on the floor. **Pregnant women, the elderly and the ill are exempt.** Sitting on a normal chair is forbidden until midday. One may sit on a low bench or chair, or on a cushion on the floor. **Greeting someone with "good morning" or other similar salutation is prohibited.** The custom is to refrain from any time-consuming work that diverts one from mourning until midday. In a case of financial loss, some concessions may be made, contact the Rabbi for more information.

PRAYER — Ashkenazim do not wear tefillin at Shacharit, nor is a blessing made on tzitzit. At Mincha, tefillin is worn and those who wear a tallit gadol make the blessing then.

THE DAY AFTER TISHA B'AV — Sources in the Talmud, Shulchan Aruch and the historian Josephus relate that the Temple's destruction started on the 9th of Av but continued through the 10th of Av. Therefore, the restrictions of the "Three Weeks" and the "Nine Days" **end on Sunday evening, July 18**, after the fast has ended. This includes the prohibition of music, haircuts, meat, and wine, laundering and bathing.

The Talmud teaches us that "anyone who mourns over Jerusalem will merit seeing it in its joy." May we merit seeing a rebuilt Jerusalem full of joy and peace.