

## תשעה באב — TISHAH B'AV — THE BLACK FAST

Candle lighting: None

Date of Commemoration: 9 Av, 5780

Commemoration Begins: Wednesday, July 29, 2020, Sunset— 8:12 PM

Commemoration Ends: Thursday, July 30, 2020, Sunset—8:11 PM

*A depiction of King Solomon's Temple, commonly known as the First Temple.*



Jerusalem was destroyed, along with the temple, twice: in 586 BCE by the Babylonians and 70 CE by the Romans. The **Hakhamim**, the Sages of Blessed Memory, charged not our enemies, but the Jewish people, for both tragedies. The first time Jerusalem was destroyed, they claimed, was due to rampant sin—murder,

idol worship, and sexual immorality. The second destruction was not due to such sins. The people were actually very observant, but they showed little compassion for each other. **Sinat hinam**, internal petty hatred, is what brought Jerusalem down.

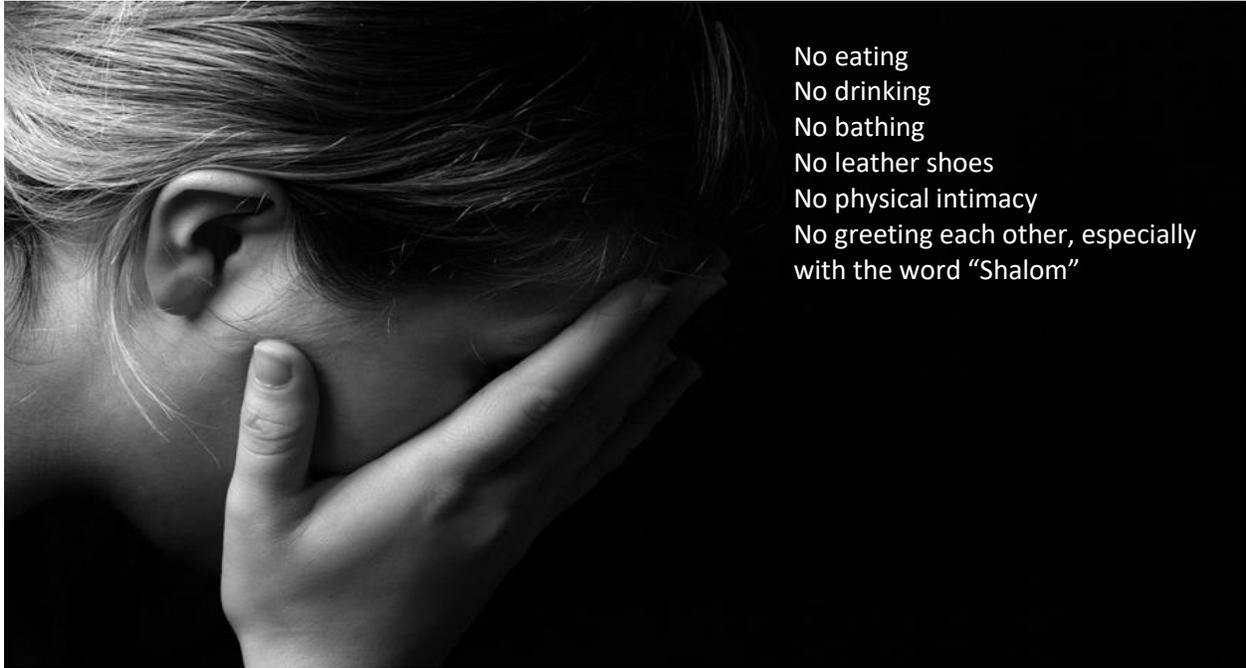
What is the point of Tishah b'Av today? Is not the State of Israel more than just compensation for a sorrow that is 2,000 years old and aging? We do thank God for the State of Israel, but Tishah b'Av remains a powerful observance in the heart of every serious Jew. It helps us redirect our hearts toward a life of ritual and moral rectitude, and an attitude of love for our fellow Jews and non-Jewish neighbors. Our history affords us critical lessons that we have to carry with us day by day.

The Tishah b'Av traditions include a full day of fasting, wearing non-leather shoes, refraining from bathing, and chanting from the biblical work **Eikhah** (Lamentations). Our Tishah b'Av schedule:

Wednesday	July 29	8:00 PM	Minḥah & Ma'ariv (afternoon & evening services)
		8:12 PM	The Fast Begins
		8:25 PM	An Eikha Presentation
		8:40 PM	The Reading of Eikhah
Thursday	July 30	7:00 AM	Shaharit (morning service) We do not wear tallit or tefillin this morning
		7:50 AM	Second Reading of Eikhah
		7:40 PM	Minḥah & Ma'ariv We do wear tallit and tefillin this evening

## THE OBSERVANCE OF TISHAH B'AV

The fast of Tishah b'Av, one of the darkest days on the Jewish calendar, is designed to turn us into mourners as were our ancestors who witnessed the destruction. As such, we observe the following restrictions:



The meal just before Tishah b'Av is known as the *se'udah mafseket*, the Divider Meal, creating a boundary between the previous week and this solemn fast day. It should be a simple, unelaborate meal, and like mourners, hard boiled eggs are served (or any round food) to symbolize the cyclical nature of our lives.

The evening service will not be sung—only spoken. And during the morning service, no tefillin will be worn, for tefillin are symbols of beauty, and this is not a beautiful day. We will don tefillin at the Minhah or Afternoon service.

Why do we do all this? We do it because part of being Jewish is remembering, and we remember not only with our heads, but with our hearts.

## SITTING ON THE GROUND AND READING A TALE OF SORROW

If you have never been to an Eikhah reading, come this year. And if you have been before, please participate again. A communal reading of a Biblical work is a powerful group activity, as we allow the narrative of our ancestors' trauma become the basis of our common relationship. These were our great, great...grandparents who witnessed the fall of a Jewish empire, the razing of the most sacred institution in our history, and the onset of a period of hopelessness, which the rabbis would put to an end by creating a more portable and humble Judaism.