



# Laws & Customs: Asarah B'Teves

For the year 5777

According to Minhag Chabad  
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Comments, questions or to subscribe: [rl@yeshivahcentre.org](mailto:rl@yeshivahcentre.org)

## ASARA B'TEVES

On this day, *Nevuchadnetzer* besieged the city of *Yerushalayim*. His campaign culminated in the destruction of the first *Beis Hamikdash*.

## WHO MUST FAST?

All must fast, including a *Chosson* and *Kallah* during the week of *Sheva Brochos*, and *Baalei Habris* (i.e. the *Mohel*, the *Sendek*, and the father of the baby).

If one inadvertently ate during the fast, one must immediately resume fasting.

Mothers who are either pregnant or nursing, or have difficulty fasting while tending to their young children, should consult with a *Rov*. [One shouldn't be unduly strict in this regard, so as not to harm the wellbeing of mother and baby.] The ill/elderly should also consult with a *Rav*.

Anyone below *Bar/Bas Mitzvah* need not fast. From the age of nine upwards, the custom is to train children to fast for several hours, as per the child's abilities.

An individual exempt from fasting should eat in private only, and avoid delicacies or excessive intake. Similarly, children old enough to understand the concept of a fast should avoid delicacies.

## EATING PRIOR TO THE FAST

One may eat and drink the entire evening until dawn (4:29am), provided that either of these conditions are met:

- One didn't go to sleep for the night. [Dozing off is not regarded as such.]
- One stipulated (preferably verbally) before going to sleep that he would eat upon waking. In this case, one recites the morning *Brochos* before eating.

## LAWS OF FASTING

One shouldn't brush one's teeth nor rinse one's mouth. [If this will cause great aggravation, there is room to be lenient, provided that one leans forward to prevent any liquid from flowing down one's throat; that one uses substances unfit for consumption (e.g. Listerine); and that one rinses with less than 86 ml.]

One may take non-chewable pills for medical purposes, without water. A *Rav* should be consulted regarding other medicines.

One may shower, bathe and apply ointments and creams.

When a *Bris* occurs on a fast, the *Seudah* takes place at night, after the fast.

One may not taste food to determine whether it requires salt/spices. However, when preparing food for a *Seudas Mitzvah* scheduled for the night following the fast, one may taste the food, provided that all these conditions are met:

- One expels it without swallowing.
- One tastes only an absolute minimum.
- One tastes less than 86 ml in total throughout the day.

## CONDUCT ON A FAST DAY

One should learn *Torah* connected to the topic of the fast.

One should give increased *Tzedakah*, especially before *davening*. It is proper to give the value of the forgone meals – especially if one is exempt from fasting.

The purpose of fasting is to arouse one to do *Teshuvah*. Idling away one's time, or partaking in joyous or entertaining activities, is not in the spirit of the fast.

One should be especially careful not to become angered.

## CHAZZAN'S RECITATION OF ANEINU

During *Shacharis*, only the *Chazzan* recites *Aneinu*. Therefore, a non-fasting individual shouldn't serve as *Chazzan*.

[In the unlikely event that the *Chazzan* is not fasting, or less than three congregants are fasting: Instead of reciting *Aneinu* between *Goel Yisroel* and *R'faeinu*, the *Chazzan* includes *Aneinu* in the *Brocho* of *Sh'ma Koleinu*, and concludes the *Brocho* regularly; i.e. *Shomea Tefillah*.]

A *Chazzan* who forgot to recite *Aneinu*:

- if he remembered before reciting *Hashem's* name at the conclusion of the *Brocho* of *R'foeinu*, he recites *Aneinu* immediately, and then repeats the *Brocho* of *R'foeinu*;
- if he already concluded the *Brocho* of *R'foeinu*, he recites *Aneinu* in the *Brocho* of *Sh'ma Koleinu*, and concludes the *Brocho* with a double conclusion; i.e. *Ha'one B'eis Tzara V'shomea Tefillah*;
- if he already concluded the *Brocho* of *Sh'ma Koleinu*, he recites *Aneinu* as a separate *Brocho* immediately after the *Brocho* of *Sim Shalom*.

## SELICHOS & AVINU MALKEINU

One who is not fasting must still recite *Selichos* and *Avinu Malkeinu*.

One who *davens* without a *Minyan* omits the *Yud-Gimel Midos-Harachamim*.

If *Tachnun* is not recited (e.g. when a *Chosson* is present), *Selichos* is still recited, whereas *Avinu Malkeinu* is not recited.

## TORAH READING

The passage of *Vayechal* is read, provided that at least three congregants are fasting.

A non-fasting individual must still hear *Krias Hatorah* of *Vayechal*, but is not called up for an *Aliya*. [If he is the only *Kohen* or *Levi*, he should absent himself.] If he is called up, and abstaining will cause him discomfort or minimize the honour of the *Torah*, he may accept the *Aliyah*.

A non-fasting individual shouldn't serve as the *Ba'al Koreh*, unless there is no one else to serve as the *Ba'al Koreh*.

When the congregation recites the verses aloud, the *Ba'al Koreh* waits for silence before resuming. The one receiving the *Aliyah* begins these verses with the congregation, but ends with the *Ba'al Koreh*.

## MINCHA

*Mincha* is longer than usual (due to *Krias Hatorah* and *Haftorah*); care should be taken to conclude before sunset (8:45pm).

*Krias Hatorah* should not begin prior to *Mincha Gedolah* (2:03pm). *Shmoneh Esrei* may certainly not begin before then.

After *Haftorah*, the *Chazzan* slowly recites *Kaddish* while the *Torah* is returned to the *Aron Hakodesh*, similar to *Mincha* on *Shabbos*.

If an individual forgot to recite *Aneinu* in the *Brocho* of *Sh'ma Koleinu*, he may recite it in the passage *Elokai N'tzor*, before the second *Yih'yu L'ratzon*. If one didn't remember until he concluded *Shmoneh Esrei*, he does not repeat it. [A non-fasting individual does not recite *Aneinu*.]

The *Chazzan* recites *Aneinu* between *Goel Yisroel* and *R'faeinu*, and also recites *Birchas Kohanim* towards the end of *Shmoneh Esrei*.

The Rebbe reintroduced the custom of addressing the congregation after *Mincha* to arouse them with feelings of *Teshuvah*.

The fast concludes at 9:18pm.