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# DAY-TO-DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

Laws & Customs for the  
Three Weeks 5782 - Part II

The Nine Days & Tishah B'av

includes Chassidic insights  
& excerpts from the Rebbe's talks

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under the auspices of Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita  
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

B"H

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& excerpts from the Rebbe's talks**

By

**Horav Yosef Yeshaya Braun, shlita**  
member of the Badatz of Crown Heights

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לעילוי נשמת  
הילד שלום הלוי ע"ה  
בן יבלחט"א הרב מנחם מענדל הלוי שליט"א  
נפטר י"ב תמוז תשפ"ב  
ו"הקיצו ורננו שוכני עפר" והוא בתוכם תיכף ומיד ממש  
ולזכות הוריו  
הרה"ת הרב מנחם מענדל הלוי זוגתו מרת נחמה רחל  
ולזכות אחותו חי' מושקא  
ואחיו צבי מאיר הלוי, לוי יצחק הלוי, גבריאל נח הלוי, ישראל ארי' ליב הלוי,  
יעקב בנימין הלוי, אברהם דוד הלוי, שניאור זלמן הלוי  
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## FOREWORD

We present a comprehensive guide for the laws of the Nine Days and *Tishah B'av* (Rosh Chodesh to 10 Av). This includes Chassidic insights & excerpts from the Rebbe's talks.

The details are derived from multiple sources, revised by Rabbi **M. M. Rotenberg**.

Due to a dearth of space only some references and halachic notes have been added. Primary sources include: *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries, *Sefer Haminhagim Chabad*, *Luach Colel Chabad*, *Sichos*, and *Igros Kodesh*.

The intention of this summary is to inform you of some of the relevant laws, not to replace each person's obligation to review the Halachos comprehensively.

### TIME TO PREPARE

In a *sichah* on the second day of Rosh Hashanah 5752, the Rebbe states:

"We need to focus on studying the laws that apply to this time of year, during which many changes are made to the standard prayers and there are numerous customs that apply. We should make certain to study these laws in the Code of Jewish Law.

"Recently, yearly calendars have begun to include many of the laws that apply to the relevant time of the year and that are necessary to know. This is particularly useful for those who, for whatever reason, do not have *sefarim* or do not know how to find what they are looking for in the *sefarim* that they own. Now, however, they can simply examine such calendars and easily find the relevant laws.

**"It is therefore extremely appropriate for every single person to peruse the contents of these calendars, such as the Kollel Chabad calendar (available both in wall size and pocket size formats) in such a manner that the laws that apply to this time of year will become fixed in his memory. After all, it sometimes happens that a halachic question arises precisely at a point during which it is forbidden to interrupt and ask for someone's guidance—or when there is nobody around to ask. Furthermore (if unfamiliar with the relevant laws beforehand), it can happen that one does not even realize that there is a problem to begin with."**

### TO REALIZE REDEMPTION

This guide incorporates several reminders about laws that will only be applicable during the Era of Redemption, with the hope that Moshiach will come speedily, allowing us to implement these laws in practice. The concept of studying these halachos is based on several sichos, some of which are quoted below:

"Hashem **begs** the Jewish people," the Rebbe passionately states, "to occupy themselves with the study of the laws of the sacrificial orders ... which (as our Sages state) is considered as if we had actually offered the sacrifices. This study will bring about the actual offerings because it brings (to quote Rambam): 'King Moshiach [who] will build the Beis Hamikdash ... and restore the laws of the Torah ... so that the Jewish people will again offer the sacrifices ... in accordance with all the mitzvos

that are stated in the Torah,' speedily, in our time—literally! Then (to quote the festival liturgy), 'We will offer before You there the offerings of our obligations ... in accordance with the commandments of Your will.'<sup>1</sup>

"We must experience greater longing and yearning for the Redemption," the Rebbe demands. "One of the ways this is accomplished is through studying more Torah on the subjects of the Redemption and the Beis Hamikdash. Studying these topics greatly hastens their actual realization, to the extent that we will go directly from studying these subjects to greet our righteous Moshiach. We will inform him, 'We have just completed studying the laws associated with your coming!' An additional motivation to study these laws is that we must expect Moshiach's arrival each and every day. In that case, these laws (concerning the Redemption and the Beis Hamikdash) are matters that every Jew—men and women alike—must know, in order to put them into practical use on a daily basis, such as many of the laws of the offerings."<sup>2</sup>

**General Note:** The times listed below are for Crown Heights only. Since one can never achieve complete precision, and many factors may influence the accuracy of these times, it is recommended to begin earlier than the time listed and not wait until the last minute (e.g., for the start of Shabbos), or to wait extra time, when that is the appropriate precaution (e.g., at the close of Shabbos).

## LEARN TO KNOW

"It's time to remind everyone," the Rebbe says in a *sichah* of Rosh Chodesh Av<sup>3</sup>, "to be judicious in learning the halachos applicable to this period of time. I am greatly surprised that no one has made any brouhaha (*tumul*) about this, in line with the clamor accompanying the campaign to learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah*. Learning these straight-out halachos in Shulchan Aruch is much more timely and relevant (*z'man gerama*) than studying *Hilchos Beis Hebechirah*. Obviously, this includes those pertaining to the Nine Days as well those regarding the (general time period) already transpiring of the Three Weeks as well."

All this talk concerning our conduct in this time period, the Rebbe says,<sup>4</sup> must be prefaced and supplemented with the caveat, "if Moshiach's coming is delayed, *chas veshalom*," since (as stated in the Rambam's Principles of Faith), "we anticipate him" that he will come today, actually. So any resolutions (in the realm of our Divine Service during *golus*) must be accompanied by the above stipulation. The truth is, though, that even after Moshiach arrives we will continue to grow in Torah and *avodah*, building on the good resolutions of the time of *golus*.

1) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, p. 34L.

2) From a *sichah* addressed to *N'shei Ub'nos Chabad—Sefer HaSichos* 5750, vol. 2, p. 485.

3) In 5748; free translation of transcription from audio. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Maasei* (see more from this occasion further on): "There are also laws that apply to our behavior during *Bein Hametzarim*, but the specifics of these appear in Shulchan Aruch—a sefer that surely every Jew has in their possession or is easily accessible to them, and since we make favorable assumptions of every Jew, each of you surely learns the appropriate timely halachos of each season, and has done the same with regard to the halachos of the Three Weeks."

4) *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Devarim* 5751

“In addition to learning the halachos of *Bein Hametzarim*,” the Rebbe says, “both those that apply to the Three Weeks and those specifically to the Nine Days, studied in order to ‘know ‘what actions are required to be performed’ (as long as Moshiach has still not arrived), and also, more generally, our mourning over the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* and our state of *golus*—for as our Sages say, ‘Someone who mourns Yerushalayim (in its state of ruin) will merit to see it in its state of joy’—we must also put special emphasis on learning those parts of Torah that focus on *geulah* concepts and on building the third *Beis Hamikdash*, as we have explained many times at length. The essential point is this: the cancellation of the *Churban* and *golus* comes about (not so much by ruminating on the deep and brutal state of *golus* but) primarily through concentrating on the elevated state of *geulah* and through awakening a passionate longing and subsequently, requesting and demanding the future redemption. It is through these efforts that we actually hasten the *geulah*—and even more effectively, for in this process we uncover the true, inner positive aspect of our loss of the *Beis Hamikdash* and the *golus* itself, thereby ‘transforming the darkness into light.’”

## THE NINE DAYS

Our Sages say, “When the month of Av arrives, we decrease our joy.”

“Although the Gemara instructs us,” the Rebbe explains<sup>5</sup> “To reduce joyfulness in Av, we nevertheless find this ‘reduction’ to be limited. We don’t reduce **all** joy. Even the month of Av has joyful elements, because joy needs to be constant, as the Torah tells us: ‘Serve Hashem with joy,’ constantly; even in Av.”

### AN UNHAPPY SECOND

The Rebbe further encourages us: The *possuk* says that Hashem has “strength and joy in His place.” In other words, wherever Hashem is, you’ll find joy. It follows, then, that to make a ‘dwelling place for Hashem (down below), we must have “strength and joy”—because only when there is both, is it “His place”. So, even during times when we are told to “reduce joy”, we must still maintain a certain sense of joy.

Why? Since the task of making a home for Hashem applies at all times, as it is the very purpose of our creation (as the Mishnah states, “I was *only* created to serve my Creator”), therefore, we have the constant obligation to fill every single moment of our lives with joy.

Yes, sometimes we must take a different approach, one which contrasts joy ... This is the *avodah* of the month of Av, to “reduce joy”, so as to remove the negativity which sent us into *golus*. But this “reduction” is secondary in our service of Hashem. So the reduction of joy remains extremely limited, for two reasons: Firstly, because in addition to it—and simultaneously—we must have the aspect of joy, and as mentioned, it must be constant, and also, the opposite of joy is not an essential aspect of our *avodah*.

<sup>5</sup> From a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Mishpatim* 5716 (part of the talk is edited and printed in *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 1, pg. 194ff.)

This is the reason Chassidim aren't "scrupulous" in the performance of the adage to reduce joy, because this temporary decrease in joy only comes second to actual *avodah*.

### THEN, A PINCH

"Some very 'stringent' people," the Rebbe tells<sup>6</sup>, "take issue with the fact that I am appealing (during this time of year) for joy, because doesn't it say 'When Av arrives we reduce our joy?' So firstly, there are twenty-four, or even thirty-six hours left until the month of Av begins. Moreover, even during the month of Av, the directive is to **reduce** joy—which means to have less joy than in the month of Adar or less than we will have when Moshiach comes—but still, there must be joy!

"How much 'reduction' is necessary? We can derive a formula from here: The (Friediker) Rebbe once related that those who struggle to serve Hashem with joy fulfill their obligation to celebrate Simchas Torah by drinking milk (because, halachically, it can be intoxicating) and by pinching their cheeks so it appears that they are laughing.

"Now, since the measure of positivity is always greater (than the negative), the requisite 'reduction' in joy should be a pinch on the other cheek!"

### TORAH & TZEDAKAH

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe quotes the well-known saying which reinterprets the "reduction of joy" during Av—namely, that we "reduce" the negativity of the Nine Days through an **increase** of joy!

Obviously, this refers to joy that is allowed according to halachah. In the Nine Days, this can be achieved through Torah and mitzvos—as it says in Tehillim,<sup>7</sup> "Hashem's Orders are just, they cause the heart to rejoice"—and this includes especially *tzedakah*, the giving of which brings joy to a pauper in the most literal sense. Another avenue of permissible joy can be achieved by making public *siyumim* on every day of the Nine Days in every possible location. This joy is generated down here, to the participant in this world, and consequently, brings joy on High.

### LAWS OF THE NINE DAYS

The halachic restrictions of the Nine Days begin from the eve of Rosh Chodesh Av. They are in effect starting from *shkiah* (sunset), as is the custom, and last until *chatzos* (midday) of the tenth of Av. This year, when the fast is pushed off to the tenth of Av, these restrictions are in effect until the end of the fast. (except for eating meat and drinking wine which is avoided until the following morning).

Within the Nine Days, there is a period of stricter mourning that applies within the week of *Tishah B'av* itself, as will be outlined below. (However, since this year

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6) From a *sichah* on *Shabbos Parshas Matos Maasei*, 5713. In *Sichos Kodesh*, pg. 354.

7) 199

*Tishah B'av* falls on Shabbos and the fast is pushed off to Sunday, these restrictions vary, as outlined below.)

A Jew who has an upcoming court case with a non-Jew should endeavor to push it off until Rosh Chodesh Elul, or at least until after *Tishah B'av*, for during this time period our *mazel* is weak.

It is customary to wait until after *Tishah B'av* to recite *Kiddush Levanah*.

### BUSINESS & SHOPPING

We are more lenient with regard to conducting business during this period than in previous eras, for usually what is earned nowadays is needed directly to support our families.

It is forbidden to purchase silverware and other expensive household appliances or nice furniture during the Nine Days. The same restriction applies to a car, washing machine/dryer or the like, if its purchase is not an immediate, pressing need.<sup>8</sup>

Basic flatware, dishes, and other necessities are permitted, though the purchase of non-urgent items should wait until after *Tishah B'av*. Comparison shopping (without actually purchasing anything) is also permitted. Window shopping for pleasure should be avoided.

If someone purchased a new piece of furniture prior to Rosh Chodesh Av that arrived during the Nine Days, they should not bring it into the house, or at least shouldn't use it until after *chatzos* on the tenth of Av. (This year, when we actually have the postponed fast on the tenth, we wait until after the fast is over.)

New clothing and shoe purchases are not permitted during the Nine Days. This restriction applies also if they aren't significant items, and even if not buying them will be at a financial loss (such as in the case where an item is on sale), and the intention is to wear the new item only after *Tishah B'av*.

In a case where it's an extraordinary sale, the sale will end before *Tishah B'av*, this particular piece of apparel will need to be purchased regardless, and it is not yet the actual week of *Tishah B'av*, the item may be purchased—especially if it will not be available at all at a later time. But it should not be worn until after the Nine Days, and if possible, should be paid for before Rosh Chodesh.<sup>9</sup>

**Mitzvah Articles:** It is permitted to purchase new *tefillin* during the Nine Days as they are only used for a mitzvah. It is forbidden, however, to purchase a *tallis*

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8) Purchasing business-related items of this caliber (like a car for commuting), is within the halachic category of limitations on general business transactions, for which, as mentioned in the halachos, we are lenient.

9) There is also room for leniency when purchasing small clothing articles for children under the age of six preceding the week of *Tishah B'av*. See [#748](http://www.asktherav.com). (This year, when *Tishah B'av* falls on Shabbos, this dispensation only applies on the actual day of Rosh Chodesh.)

or *tzitzis* since, despite being designated only for a mitzvah, they are considered clothing.<sup>10</sup>

It is permitted to purchase a new yarmulka and *tzitzis* for an *upshernish* boy who turns three during the Nine Days (as mentioned earlier, all traditions associated with turning three apply on his birthday, aside from the haircut itself). However, if possible, it is proper to purchase earlier and get him accustomed to wearing the *tzitzis* before Rosh Chodesh.

**Tishah B'av Shoes:** You may purchase non-leather shoes to wear on *Tishah B'av* if you do not have them yet. You may even wear them for the first time on *Tishah B'av* itself.

### CONSTRUCTION & GARDENING

From Rosh Chodesh Av on, we limit construction that engenders joy, like those in the category of home decoration. This includes any renovations that are not needed to make a home livable; restrictions include home extensions, additions, and any home improvements. Likewise, we do not paint our homes, put up new wallpaper, or purchase or install new carpeting.

Some have the tradition of not washing the floors during the Nine Days, though it is permitted even during the week of *Tishah B'av* itself from a strict halachic perspective. If grime and dirt have accumulated, there is no custom to be stringent, especially if it is done in honor of Shabbos. However, we do not shine floors as it is only for pleasure and not out of necessity, similar to cosmetic renovations.

Building restrictions apply even with non-Jewish contractors and workers. However, if you contracted the work prior to Rosh Chodesh with an open date for completion after the Nine Days, the non-Jew may work during this time, even on *Tishah B'av* itself, for they are working at that time for their own benefit.

If someone has a contract with a non-Jew to paint their home, it is also permitted (for the reason mentioned above). Nevertheless, it is praiseworthy, though not required, to try to offer a small compensation for the worker to wait to complete the work after *Tishah B'av*.

A Jew whose livelihood is in construction is permitted to construct and renovate the home of a non-Jew during the Nine Days.

A shul or *beis midrash* may be constructed or renovated during the Nine Days without restriction. Similarly, you may construct a *ma'akeh* (a fence for a roof, which is a Biblical mitzvah) during this time, even on *Tishah B'av* itself.

A crumbling wall that might collapse may be repaired even if it poses no actual danger and fixing it immediately is only to prevent a more costly repair down the line. Even though this is construction that causes gratification, and not strictly out

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<sup>10</sup> If either garment tears, and you have no replacement and cannot borrow or obtain second-hand (or, if they are at hand but you are too particular to don a used garment), you may purchase and wear new to fulfill a mitzvah.

of necessity, it is permitted, because the main intention is to prevent monetary loss. During the Nine Days, it is forbidden to plant trees for shade and beauty, or any type of flower or fragrant bush. Watering existing plants is permitted. It is permitted to purchase flowers for Shabbos, especially if this is a weekly habit.

### CELEBRATIONS

It is permitted to get engaged and have a *L'chaim* during the Nine Days, but you may not make a celebratory *seudah* (even on Shabbos).<sup>11</sup> Only refreshments should be served.

Someone who has experienced a miracle should host a *seudas hoda'ah* (meal of thanks to Hashem) on the anniversary of the day to contemplate and share their rescue story. If the day of the miracle occurred during the Nine Days, it is still a time to recall it and feel gratitude to Hashem, but the *seudah* and celebration should be postponed until *Shabbos Nachamu* or the fifteenth of Av.

During the Three Weeks, it is the custom not to host a *chanukas habayis* (housewarming), since it is not an auspicious time. During the Nine Days it is halachically forbidden, even if there is no meat on the menu, as such a gathering is included within the restriction of decreased joy.

### LAUNDRY

Doing laundry is forbidden during the Nine Days. This also applies to clothing that you don't plan on wearing until after *Tishah B'av*. Laundering is not permitted even if you are traveling immediately after the fast.

There is room for leniency in laundering items to prevent permanent damage to the clothing, like if it will become moldy. Washing them, in this instance, isn't detracting from properly mourning the Beis Hamikdash.

We also do not bring clothing to the dry cleaners, despite the fact that the cleaning process is chemical and not water-based.

Bed linens, and even handkerchiefs and tablecloths, are included in the prohibition against laundering.

A Jew may not launder the clothing of a non-Jew in the week of *Tishah B'av* (the stricter period within the Nine Days. This year, this restriction applies to the week of the ninth of Av as well, despite the postponed fast.)

You may not give your clothing to a non-Jewish launderer from Rosh Chodesh and on. However, if it was handed in before Rosh Chodesh, you are not required to warn against washing them during the Nine Days. If you do not have a clean shirt for Shabbos, a non-Jew may wash it for you during the Nine Days; it is better to be careful not to do this in the home of a Jew, to prevent *maris ayin*.

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<sup>11</sup>) It appears that it is likewise forbidden to make any other social party-*seudah* during the Nine Days.

It is forbidden to wash a wig during the Nine Days. If there is a real need, there is room for leniency, before the week on *Tishah B'av*. It is permitted to style and comb—even with the assistance of hair products—and trim a wig (especially for *tznius* reasons).

Adults are prohibited from laundering children's clothing, though we can follow a lenient opinion that allows this prior to the week of *Tishah B'av*.<sup>12</sup> However, you may launder the clothing of young children<sup>13</sup> who are constantly getting dirty throughout the Nine Days. Do so discreetly and restrain from adding any other clothing to the wash. If possible, have a minor child (or a non-Jew) wash the soiled clothing.

This leniency only applies to situations when the clothing is needed for the moment. However, we may not launder clothing that will be put aside for later.

Ironing is likewise forbidden, whether garments are for immediate use or to put away for a later time.

### WEARING LAUNDERED CLOTHES

We are prohibited from wearing freshly laundered or ironed clothing during the Nine Days, even if they were laundered before Rosh Chodesh. This also applies to bedding<sup>14</sup>, handkerchiefs, tablecloths and the like.

For medical reasons, such as to prevent an infection, or if not changing the sheets would cause skin irritation, and likewise in hospitals, it is permitted to use freshly laundered sheets.

If the clothing was worn even once before Rosh Chodesh, they are permitted to be worn during the Nine Days themselves.

If someone has no unsoiled clothing, they may wash them up to the week of *Tishah B'av*. (This year, this restriction applies to the week before the ninth of Av as well.) In cases of extreme hardship—as opposed to mild discomfort—such as shirt, pants, dresses or the like, that are so soiled that they would cause embarrassment when worn in public, you may launder them (especially a sweat-soaked garment). Wash only what you need at the time—even if you might later need to wash more. Scuff the freshly laundered clothes somewhat (by throwing them on a dirty floor) before wear.

**Underclothes:** We are customarily more lenient with laundered underclothes and socks and can exchange them when necessary during the Nine Days. This is especially nowadays, when everyone is particular about these things, and forgoing

12) Up until *Shabbos Chazon* (including this year, when it is the ninth of Av). See [www.asktherav.com #558](http://www.asktherav.com #558).

13) The definition of “young child” in this context: We customarily practice these leniencies up until the age of *chinuch*, which is six years old. If an item is extremely dirty, you can rely on the opinions that are more lenient with children until the age of Bar Mitzvah.

14) In the case of a guest, it is permitted to make a bed with fresh sheets, as no guest is comfortable using linen that someone else has slept in. Towels at the mikvah, likewise.

them would cause hardship. If you run out of clean underclothes, it is better to purchase new and scuff them somewhat by throwing them on the floor than laundering. If purchasing new is not possible, you may launder just what is needed and subsequently muss them up.<sup>15</sup>

**Children:** Young children whose clothing requires washing during the Nine Days (see above) are permitted to wear freshly laundered clothing.

Freshly laundered clothing for Shabbos are permitted, like any other Shabbos (but no new clothing). Likewise, a clean tablecloth may be spread. But bed linens may not be changed until after *Tisha B'av*.

**Shabbos Clothing:** It is forbidden to wear Shabbos clothing during the Nine Days.<sup>16</sup> At a *bris*, it is customary that the *mohel*, the *sandek*, the woman who brings in the baby, Called a *kevaterin*,<sup>17</sup> the parents, grandparents, and other relatives wear Shabbos clothing (if they would wear them at any another time for this relative). Likewise, at a *pidyon haben*—the parents and the *kohen* wear Shabbos clothing. Halachically, at a *seudah* that takes place on the thirteenth birthday itself, only the bar mitzvah boy and his parents wear Shabbos clothing.

## MEAT & WINE

It is customary not to eat meat or drink wine from Rosh Chodesh until the fast, including Rosh Chodesh itself. Even though this is not a halachic prohibition (to the point that, strictly speaking, meat and wine are not proscribed even the day before the fast, except for *seudah hamafsekes*), it is said that about someone who eats meat and drinks wine where the prevailing custom is not to, is opening themselves up to negative ramifications (as the *possuk* says, “one who breaks boundaries, snakes will bite him”).

A sick person (even someone mildly ill, unless it is assured that a dairy diet will do no harm), also someone who is lactose intolerant, pregnant, or nursing a weak child (whose health would be compromised if the mother didn't eat meat), is permitted to eat chicken. If there is no chicken, they may eat meat. Today, when there are many meatless but healthy alternatives, it is preferable to avoid chicken or meat, unless doing so would compromise health. Additionally, by listening in to a *siyum*, they are able to eat meat.

A woman who is within thirty days of giving birth may eat meat and drink wine, if needed. A woman who does so in these circumstances, should best to avoid doing so from the seventh to the ninth of Av, but not if there are health concerns.

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<sup>15</sup> See [#10223](http://www.asktherav.com). The leniency on purchasing applies only to underclothes. You cannot shop for new clothing, but should launder as indicated above if left without clean clothes.

<sup>16</sup> For shidduch dating, if you have no other nice clothing available, you can be lenient and wear Shabbos clothing.

<sup>17</sup> But the man who brings the baby in and out [called a *kvatter*] and other *mehubadim* (honorees) are not included in this category.

Someone who made a *brachah* on meat or wine by mistake should eat just a small quantity quickly so that it doesn't become a blessing in vain. This tiny bit does not qualify to add enjoyment during the Nine Days, nor is it considered to have broken the custom of avoiding these foods.

### WHAT IS "MEAT"?

The prohibition to eat meat includes also chicken, cured meats and all dishes cooked with meat.<sup>18</sup> You may cook pareve food in a *fleishig* pot, even if the pot was used for meat within the last twenty-four hours. You may also eat soup that contains onions cut with a *fleishig* knife.

Children under six years old may eat meat during the Nine Days.

### WHAT IS "WINE"?

The prohibition of drinking wine includes grape juice and foods cooked with wine. Wine vinegar is permitted. Beer is also permitted, as are all other alcoholic beverages (aside from wine).

If needed for medical reasons, you can be lenient and drink wine or grape juice mixed with enough water that the taste of the wine is extremely diluted (and halachically, the *brachah* of *Hagafen* cannot be said on the drink).

We are customarily stringent not to drink the wine for *bentching* on a weekday. Instead, the wine is given to a young child who is capable of making a *brachah*, but has not yet reached the age of following the laws of mourning during the Nine Days. The child should drink a full mouthful. If there is no child present, do not *bentch* over wine. If someone has already *bentched* over a cup of wine, and there is no child present, he should place the cup aside and not drink from it.

Concerning the wine for *havdalah*, see further, in the halachos of *motzoei Shabbos*.

### SEUDAS MITZVAH

You are allowed to eat meat and drink wine (including the cup of wine from *bentching*) at a *seudas mitzvah*, like a *bris* (even if it's not on time), *pidyon haben*, *seudas bar mitzvah* (that takes place on the actual birthday of the Bar Mitzvah boy), and at a *siyum* of a *mesechta*.<sup>19</sup> This applies only to those who are associated with the event, meaning those who would have attended, as a relative or friend,<sup>20</sup> had the event taken place at a different time of the year. This includes also the women who participate for these reasons, if it is the norm for women to attend.

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<sup>18</sup> If meat mistakenly falls into a cooked dish, it does not invalidate the rest of the food if it is 1/60 or less of the full volume.

<sup>19</sup> See below for the details of the laws and customs regarding *siyumei mesechtos*.

<sup>20</sup> However, those who go just to drink, and wouldn't have necessarily gone to the meal otherwise, should not partake, as this falls under the category of a *mitzvah* that results from an *aveirah*.

But someone who wants to partake of the food of the *seudas mitzvah* at home, may not have wine or meat.<sup>21</sup> (It should be noted that there are those who do not serve meat or drink wine even at a *seudas mitzvah* during the Nine Days at all, so that the entire population can partake.)

However, the cup of wine from the *brochos* from the bris is given to a child to drink, since this is before the *seudah* commences. If there is no child, the one who made the brachah drinks it himself, and it is not given to the baby who has just had the *bris*.

**Shechitah:** According to the Ramah, the slaughtering knife is put away on Rosh Chodesh Av, as *shechting* is only performed during the Nine Days when it is necessary for a mitzvah, such as for a sick person, Shabbos or *milah* (or *pidyon haben*). However, nowadays, when the majority of Jews live in big cities, which always have people of poor health and women who recently gave birth, and we also need meat to be available for Shabbos, it is no longer customary to shelve the *shechitah* knife.

### NAIL TRIMMING

It is permitted to cut your nails during the Nine Days, except during the week of *Tisha b'Av* itself. (This year, this restriction applies to the week before the ninth of Av as well.) However, you may cut your nails Lekovod Shabbos.<sup>22</sup>

### SHOWERING/BATHING

It is forbidden to wash your entire body for pleasure, even with cold water, during the Nine Days. However, you may wash your hands, feet and face and shower with the following requirements: the water cannot be hot; the showering cannot be for pleasure; and you cannot wash more than half of your body.<sup>23</sup>

If the above protocol is not enough to remove dirt and sweat it's permissible to wash the entire body, one part at a time. If lukewarm water doesn't do the job, it is permissible to use hot water and even soap, to remove profuse sweat and an offensive body odor. Someone who is moderately sweaty but very particular, and not washing would entail great hardship, may also shower to the extent necessary. You should shower discreetly, and not at the public *mikvah*, or the like.

However, a full shower to simply cool off from the hot weather is not warranted during a time period when we mourn the tragedy that has befallen the *Beis Hamikdash*. Restrict washing activity to whatever extent possible; even with the

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21) Within the week of *Tisha B'Av* itself, only a limited *minyán* of men besides the *baalei hasimcha* and close relatives (only those close enough to be invalidated as kosher witnesses) may eat meat and drink wine). Since *Tishah B'av* is on Shabbos, we are lenient concerning certain strictures of the week of the ninth of Av, and **this** halachah does not apply this year.

22) For a woman going to the *mikvah*, or if someone suspects that his nails might be a *chatzitzta* for *netilas yadayim*, nail cutting is permitted even during the week of *Tishah B'av*.

23) Water sprinklers may also be used to cool off in the Nine Days in this manner.

above parameters, a *yareh Shomayim* is careful not to take too many leniencies and will change their normal showering habits, even to the point of slight discomfort, especially during the week of *Tishah B'av*.

Similarly, swimming in a pool or in the sea is not permitted.<sup>24</sup>

It is permitted to wash, even in hot water, if needed for health—such as a sick person, pregnant woman or a woman who has just given birth.

A man who goes to the *mikvah* regularly before davening is permitted to go during the Nine Days.

For a mitzvah,<sup>25</sup> you should wash yourself as normal (with hot water and with soap). See later in the section *erev Shabbos Chazon* concerning bathing for Shabbos

## SEWING

We may not sew or alter new clothing, or cobble shoes, in the Nine Days. Although, by the strict definition of halachah, working on old clothing is not proscribed, since it is customary to avoid laundering clothing, this extends to mending them as well. All this only applies to complete alterations, but it is permitted to mend old clothing with small repairs that don't require a professional tailor.

Sewing wedding clothes for a wedding, where the groom has no children from a previous marriage<sup>26</sup> is permitted during the Nine Days. On *Tishah B'av* itself it is permitted as well, if the tailor is not Jewish.

A Jewish tailor or cobbler may not create new apparel for others, whether commissioned or free. Even if the work is for a non-Jew, it is forbidden (because of how it appears to the common observer), unless it's public knowledge that the work is for non-Jews. If the Jew needs the work to pay for basic necessities such as food, he is permitted even if it's not public knowledge that it's for a non-Jew. There

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24) You can be lenient, if necessary, with children under six years old. However, precautions should be taken because this is a time of *sakanah*, as stated earlier in the halachos of the Three Weeks. Someone who is learning to swim for purposes related to earning a living, and began lessons before the Nine Days but has not completed the course, may go swimming in a lake even after Rosh Chodesh, since this is career-oriented and not for pleasure. Nevertheless, in both these circumstances, it is certainly best to be stringent.

25) This applies to a woman who needs to use the *mikvah*—she prepares herself as normal with hot water and then immerses. Even if she is visiting the *mikvah* on *motzoei Tisha B'Av*, she may still wash herself on *erev Tisha B'Av*, and then complete her preparations after the fast is over. This year, this preparatory time coincides with *erev Shabbos*, when bathing is allowed for Shabbos, regardless—and she visits the *mikvah* after the postponed fast. From the time she finishes bathing, she should be careful of *chatzitzah*—like not walking barefoot so that dirt and other substances don't stick to her soles.

The limitations on bathing are also suspended if she must make a *hefsek taharah* during the Nine Days; she may wash the prescribed areas as normal.

26) In halachic sources, (and at times and in places where polygomy is legal) this dispensation also does not apply to marriages where the groom has children from his other wife.

are leniencies that may be applied in this case, even for a Jew, if the work was commissioned before Rosh Chodesh.

There are leniencies for alterations commissioned via a non-Jewish tailor, if the clothing was handed in before Rosh Chodesh and ordered to be ready for after the fast. But it is best to avoid this situation when possible.

**Weaving:** Traditionally, women avoid warping their looms (tying the foundational threads) on account of mourning at this time when the *Even Hashesiya* (the Foundation Stone of the world, which lived in the Holy of Holies in the *Beis Hamikdash*) was nullified.<sup>27</sup> Other similar practices in cloth-making are also restricted, such as knitting and crocheting. Spinning thread is permitted as it isn't related to weaving. Weaving with twigs (caning) or lanyard are also allowed, because they are not related to clothing fabrication at all.

### SIYUMIM

The Rebbe says<sup>28</sup>: Please publicize everywhere possible and inspire others about the *minhag* of having *siyumim* on each of the Nine Days<sup>29</sup> in order to add in the joy of Torah in a permissible manner. In this way, we will nullify those matters that are contrary to joy.

Since the effects of the ninth of Av last until the fifteenth of Av it is suggested that, should Moshiach be, G-d forbid, delayed, the *siyumim* should continue during the remaining days until—and including—the fifteenth of Av.

“Through arranging a ‘completion’ (*siyum*) in Torah,” the Rebbe explains,<sup>30</sup> “we cause a ‘completion’ within all other matters in the world, including and most importantly, the completion of Exile. In fact, the appropriate term truly is the *completion* of Exile and not its nullification, for we are referring to the (positive) conclusion and completeness of the Exile itself, which is wrought by drawing the א (Alef—i.e., Hashem, the Master [Aluf] of the Universe) into the Exile. We thus transform Exile (Golah—גולה) into Redemption (Geulah—גאולה).”

### SIYUM PARTICIPANTS

We should expend effort to ensure that the *siyumim* will draw a great attendance. Both men and women should attend these *siyumim*—seated separately, of course—as well as children.

Customarily, everyone gathers around the person conducting the *siyum* before he has recited the *siyum* of the *mesechta*, and he completes it in their presence. Everyone listens and joins in his *siyum*, and then has a *seudah*.

27) Girls learning to sew, weave, knit, or crochet should not continue their lessons during the Nine Days. Summer camps should also restrict these activities. An ill woman who embroiders (or needlepoints, or similar) to calm her nerves, may do so even during the Nine Days.

28) *Sichas Parshas Devarim*, 5751. In *Hisvaduyos* p.96

29) “And also regarding the *siyum* of the Rambam that will take place during this time this year (in 5751)”

30) *Sichas 5 Menachem Av*, 5748. In *Hisvaduyos* p.108

## TZEDAKAH & FARBRENGEN

The *siyum* should be associated with the giving of *tzedakah*. On Shabbos, give spiritual *tzedakah* (forms of lovingkindness that are permitted), and then after Shabbos, give physical *tzedakah* as well.<sup>31</sup>

It is good to combine the *siyum* (where appropriate) with a *seudah* and *farbrengen*. The Rebbe Rashab had the *minhag* to “make *siyumim*” during the Nine Days, despite the fact that he wouldn’t have a *seudah* afterward with meat and wine.

## SIYUM MENU

It is permitted to eat meat and drink wine at the *seudah* of a *siyum*, if the attendees would have taken part out of friendship, had this *siyum* taken place any other time.<sup>32</sup>

There are those who practice, as did the Rebbe Rashab, not to eat meat or drink wine during the Nine Days, even when participating in a *siyum*. This is to preclude the need to decide from among the various and conflicting halachic opinions regarding these particular type of *siyumim*, and whether they qualify for a *seudas mitzvah* with wine and meat that override the mourning practices of the Nine Days. Among these questions are: Does the allowance apply to a *siyum* that is being made especially for the Nine Days, and if not for the desire for a dining dispensation, would have been held earlier or later? Who can enjoy this meal? Anyone who participates in the *siyum*, or only those who would show up for this learner’s *siyum* on any other day of the year? What is the normal practice of the *siyum*-maker—does he generally have a meal following completion of a *mesechta*? Is it enough if it is usually a light meal, or does he specifically have to have a tradition of serving wine and meat? What if the person has no history to bank on, since he only makes *siyumim* during the Nine Days altogether? While the halachic consensus is that meat and wine are allowed in most circumstances, many choose to serve only fish and beverages other than wine at these events.

## IN PERSON

According to the letter of the law, joining a *siyum* via radio, telephone, or other virtual means is considered taking part, even for the intent of being able to eat meat and drinking wine, if this participant would have joined during another time out of friendship to the person making the *siyum*. However, it is preferable to join in person.

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31) A hand-written note from the Rebbe states: “Enjoin Anash who participate in the *siyumim*, that every *siyum* conclude with an announcement that calls to (increase in) giving *tzedakah*—in addition to earlier suggestion that every *siyum* conclude with words on the theme of *Ahavas Yisrael*.”

32) See above in the section of halachos of eating meat and drinking wine. In the week of *Tisha B'Av* itself, it is permissible to eat meat only with a *minyan* of men besides relatives who are related closely enough to be invalidated as kosher witnesses.) This latter caveat does not apply this year, as *Tishah B'av* falls on Shabbos, in which case this particular restriction is not enforced.

If someone walks into a *seudah* that followed a *siyum*, is he considered a participant regarding eating meat and drinking wine? Or, the opposite, if someone listened in on the *siyum* but did not partake in the *seudah*, may he eat meat later at home? In practice, we can be lenient in these matters during the Nine Days,<sup>33</sup> and even having partaken of only one aspect suffices.

### SIYUM CRITERIA

Someone who completed a *mesechta* from beginning to end, previously, but hasn't yet conducted a *siyum* (with the associated practices, including recitation of "Hadran..."), it is proper to make a celebration, but this is not considered an actual *siyum* and eating meat and drinking wine are not permitted.

A *siyum* on a *mesechta* of Mishnayos (preferably learned with at least one commentary, such as the Bartenura) qualifies as a celebration worthy of serving meat at the accompanying meal. Nevertheless, it is better to conduct the *siyum* on a *mesechta* (and not just a perek) of Gemara, so that the *siyum* satisfies all halachic criteria, or on one complete book in the Rambam's Mishnah Torah, or the like.<sup>34</sup>

Someone who took part in a Gemara shiur, and completed an entire *mesechta*, may conduct a *siyum*, even though he has not learned the *mesechta* inside. This is because the main point of studying the Oral Torah is comprehension, and not the wording.

Our custom is that following a *siyum* we say *kaddish d'raban* and not the *kaddish* that is printed at the end of a *mesechta*.

## FRIDAY, ROSH CHODESH MENACHEM-AV

### Erev Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei

Today is the *yahrtzeit* of Aharon Hakohen.<sup>35</sup>

#### THE MOON GROWS

"In some respects, Rosh Chodesh is considered a Yom Tov," the Rebbe says,<sup>36</sup> "as it is the greatest and most special day of the month. In addition, Rosh Chodesh is the root and source, and therefore contains, all the days of the month.

"Regarding Rosh Chodesh Av, there is extra special significance to the 'Yom Tov' as this fifth month includes the 'fifth fast day' (of the ones associated with the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*) that is destined to be transformed into a day of

33) Not so on *erev Pesach*. A firstborn must participate in the *siyum* in order to have dispensation to break his fast.

34) See [#5039](http://www.asktherav.com)

35) As described in this week's *parshah*, Bamidbar 33:38. Regarding today's significance, see *Sichas Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av* 5735, 5741 and 5751; *Shabbos Meworchim Menachem Av* 5739, among others.

36) From a *sichah* on Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5749

happiness, joy, and a Yom Tov, as will all the fast days. And since this fast represents the greatest descent, it's self-understood that, after the transformation, it will represent the greatest ascent—it will be the greatest Yom Tov of them all.

“Moreover, the month of Av includes the advantage of the fifteenth of Av, a day that the Gemara calls the greatest of all Yomim Tovim. And because the greatness of the fifteenth of Av stems from it being the day that the moon shines to its fullest, this advantage already begins from Rosh Chodesh, the day of the *molad* (the birth of this month's moon). In other words, the start of the moon's ultimate perfection is from the moment it begins to wax, on Rosh Chodesh. So the advantage of the fifteenth of Av as the greatest Yom Tov can already be felt on Rosh Chodesh Av.”

### HALLEL, HOW?

On a Rosh Chodesh Av, the Rebbe says<sup>37</sup>: [Today], Rosh Chodesh Av, we say *Hallel*. *Hallel* is connected with the concept of revelation, as the Alter Rebbe explains in *Likkutei Torah*<sup>38</sup>: The word *Hallel* is etymologically related to the *possuk* from *Iyov*, “*B'hilo neiro* –(Hashem) lit His candle”, the concept of ‘light’, revelation. Now, seemingly, the revelation of Hashem's light and the events of the month of Av contradict each other. Nevertheless, we do say *Hallel* on this Rosh Chodesh, same as on every other one, to bring these two opposing ideas together. We can transform the darkness of the negative aspects of this month themselves to become light and revelation. We know this from the *possuk* in *Koheles*,<sup>39</sup> “Wisdom is greater than foolishness, just like light is greater than darkness.”—and an alternate reading is: “the light that emerges from within the darkness is greater...” This transformation is possible on the level, as it says in *Tehillim*<sup>40</sup>, “Night will be lit up like the day”, and all darkness, *golus*, and negativity will be gone forever.

More on this vein, from 5741: Rosh Chodesh comes with lots of joy, for it is a day on which we recite *Hallel*. *Hallel* is recited only on a day of great happiness, a special time of celebration, as we can see from the Gemara concerning the ill-advised conduct of a person who says it every day—the daily grind is not *Hallel*-worthy.

However, when such an opportunity of joy does arise, and we fail to say *Hallel*, that too is inappropriate. As the Gemara also says regarding King Chizkiyahu, who was punished because he did not properly praise Hashem for the miracles wrought to him. The same applies to today, Rosh Chodesh Av. Not only is Rosh Chodesh not a regular workday, it is a day we say *Hallel*, a special time of joy!

This is actually a novel idea, surprising, that we find ourselves in the time of *Bein Hameitzarim*, and on the first of the (even more difficult) Nine Days, and nevertheless, we say *Hallel*, an act of celebration and joy!

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37) From a *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5737

38) *Parshas Tzav* 14:4.

39) 2:13

40) 139:12

## ALL ABOUT AV

In various *sichos*, the Rebbe explains different meanings of the name “Menachem Av”.

“Av” represents Hashem’s fundamental relationship with Yidden, the essential love of a father (*av*, in Hebrew) to a child, coupled with the descriptor “Menachem” (comforting), so He is the Father who comes and uncovers the essential love, thereby soothing the pain of *golus*.

The idea of comfort (in contrast to other types of emoting) is that it is transformational, exchanging one extreme for another, not as a steady rise or a gradual change. The word “Menachem” is also etymologically connected to “regret” (for the past), and also draws a connection to the ultimate “change” in our state of *golus*—Moshiach, for “His name is Menachem”, as it says in Gemara Sanhedrin. This cathartic comfort begins not only after the terrible events of this month (after *Tishah B'av*) but already from Rosh Chodesh.

Who offers this comfort? Hashem Himself, the Parent Who is described as both “Merciful Father” and “Father of Mercy”—the very source of *rachmanus*. In the name of the month, “Menachem” precedes “Av”, comfort becoming His primary role, (and cancelling out the negative aspects) to the point that in certain places when the name of the month is shortened, it is merely called “Menachem.”

Chassidus explains that “Av” represents such an elevated level of mercy, that it is above all of *seder hishtalshelus* (the chain-like contraction and containment of the Divine Light, which is the process of creating the higher and nether worlds). Through the precursor of “Menachem”, this lofty mercy can fulfill its purpose and be experienced.

Another aspect of the order of the words is that it can take on the meaning that it is the “Comforting of the Father (Himself)!” Hashem, too, is affected by *golus*, on a deep and essential level, for we, His children, are in a state of being a lowly and downtrodden nation. Where does His comfort come from? Through these very children, despite our being so cast down! But the power to do this also from the Father—that notwithstanding our current situation, we contain within us His very essence (the *neshamah*).

On the other hand, in terms of the order of the words, we can view “Menachem” as the starting act, and once we’ve reached this considerable accomplishment, we top it off with “Av”, the comfort being bolstered yet more, in tune with the *possuk* from Tehillim<sup>41</sup>, “Like a father’s mercy”—experiencing Hashem’s Mercy of the Highest Levels.

These specific *sichos* expound on this particular topic:

In 5730<sup>42</sup>: “A custom of the Jewish people is Torah” the Rebbe quotes. “So there is much significance in the fact that this month is customarily called ‘Menachem Av’, as we see from the laws of contracts and wedding *kesubos*. There are some

41) 103:13

42) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*

instances where people refer to this month by the shortened term ‘Menachem’. And it is acceptable! Even according to those halachic opinions that its official name is plain ‘Av’, if a document is dated with only ‘Menachem’ it is still legitimate, for it is common enough in all Jewish communities that the name ‘Menachem’ is recognizable as referring to the month of ‘Av’.

“Now, since this practice is something that has been publicized among *Yidden*, it is clear that this is a concept that applies to *Yiddishkeit* broadly, since halachic documents and contracts affect *Yidden* specifically. So there is, for each of us, the possibility of relating to this month simply ‘Menachem’, which means comfort (and not by its more negative aspects). And as we say when we officially bless the new month (using both names), we say ‘Menachem’ before ‘Av’, and the comfort achieves a status of being the leader; it is first not only chronologically, but also in its meaning, since this (added name to the month) is connected with Torah (and halachah), for which value is related to quality over quantity.”

In 5707<sup>43</sup>: The name of this month is “Av”, as is written on a *gett*, but on a *kesubah* and when we bless the new month we say “Menachem Av”. We can explain this according to what it says in Chassidus: the magnitude of a father’s love for his son is apparent when he is disciplining him (even though the son is not feeling it at the moment), which is the state of *Yidden* in *golus*. We are then likened to a divorced wife, like it says in the Gemara Yuma. This is why a *gett* written at this time is dated “Av” (which connotes “Father”, but the great love is hidden). However, our desire and our plea is that this love should be actually revealed. Therefore when we make a blessing on the month, and also when we write a *kesubah* that has the sole purpose to strengthen the marriage (the exact opposite of divorce) —at these times we emphasize the “Menachem” aspect of this month.

## A DAY FOR MOSHIACH

“Every Rosh Chodesh the spark of Moshiach, also known as the *Yechidah* in every Jew’s soul (which is a spark of the general *Yechidah*—the soul of Moshiach) is revealed.

The revelation of this spark resonates and causes a rejuvenation in the entire being of every Jew, so that everything they do is permeated with the level of *Yechidah*, and, most importantly, through this we cause the revelation and arrival of Moshiach in the most literal sense—that a king from the house of David, a soul in body etc.”<sup>44</sup>

## PRAYERS

*Yaaleh ve’yavo* is recited in the *Amidah* and in *Birchas Hamazon*. If you forgot, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

When saying the brachah *Me’ein Shalosh* (for items requiring *al hamichya*, the seven fruits or wine), the proper wording for today is: *Vezechreinu l’tovah b’yom*

<sup>43</sup> *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem Av*, recorded by the Rebbe in *Igros Kodesh*, vol 2, p. 213

<sup>44</sup> *Sichah* of *Parshas Toldos* 5752

*Rosh Hachodesh hazeh*. If you forget, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

In Shacharis, half-*Hallel*<sup>45</sup> is recited, then *V'avraham zaken*, *Kaddish tiskabel*, *Shir shel Yom (shishi bashabbos)*, *Hoshi'einu*, *Barchi nafshi*, and *Kaddish Yasom*, followed by the reading of the Torah.

### KRIAS HATORAH

Four *aliyos* are read in the Rosh Chodesh reading (**Kohen**—until *olah tamid*, **Levi**—reread the verse of *vamarta lahem* until *revi'is hahin*, **Shlishi**—until *veniska*, and **Revi'i**—*Uv'roshei chadsheichem* until *venisko*.)

The Torah reading is followed by *chatzi-Kaddish*; *hagbah* and *gelilah*; *Ashrei* and *Uva letziyon*—the *chazzan* does not conclude *Uva letziyon* aloud. That is followed by *Yehalelu* and the return of the Torah to the *aron*. The *tefillin* are then removed, *Rabbeinu Tam tefillin* are donned and then removed before continuing with Musaf.

The *chazzan* should recite a chapter of Tehillim before beginning *chatzi-Kaddish* for Musaf.

**Law of Redemption:** We offer the following *Korban Musaf* in the *Beis Hamikdash* in honor of Rosh Chodesh: two bulls, one ram, seven lambs as burnt-offerings, and one goat for a sin-offering. These are in addition to the daily *Korban Tamid*.

We will all ascend to the *Beis Hamikdash* in Yerushalayim—not just three times a year, for Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, but also for each Shabbos and for each *Rosh Chodesh* (as it says in Navi<sup>46</sup>).

### ROSH CHODESH CUSTOMS

It is a mitzvah to enhance the quality of our meals on Rosh Chodesh.

It is an ancient custom, on each Rosh Chodesh, to study one verse of the chapter of Tehillim that corresponds with the current years of a person's life. The verse should be studied with the commentary of Rashi, and additional commentaries may be added as well. If the current chapter contains less than twelve verses, or in a leap year, when there are more than twelve months, verses that have been studied on a previous Rosh Chodesh should be studied a second time. Similarly, if the current chapter contains many verses, then two or three verses should be studied at once on each Rosh Chodesh of the year.

### FRIDAY AFTERNOON

Today, we read *shnayim mikra* for *Parshas Matos-Maasei*.

Light candles today at 7:56 pm.

45) Does one make a brachah on half-*Hallel* if davening without a *minyan*? See [#2750](http://www.asktherav.com)

46) *Yeshayah* 10:23

## SHABBOS PARSHAS MATOS-MAASEI, SHABBOS CHAZAK, 2 AV

### SHOW JOY TODAY

“Some people,” the Rebbe observes,<sup>47</sup> “Even while they are singing *Sheyibaneh Beis Hamikdash*, they use a feeble tone, and when they are done, they wipe the sweat off their forehead, and say: *Whew! I did good*. Now, even throughout the year, we have to assess whether this is legitimate conduct (that a person should do the minimum in this area), but when it comes to these days of *Bein Hameitzarim*, how much more careful we must be! At this time, we have to be extremely careful not to exhibit disparaging behavior, so that no one should think that on these Shabbosim, someone is practicing *aveilus* (acts of mourning)—there are many stories about how much care must be taken with regard to this halachah<sup>48</sup> .

“So, these Shabbosim demand an extra dose of joy over every other Shabbos in the year, which every one is joyous, as we know that when the *possuk* says<sup>49</sup> (regarding blowing trumpets), ‘And on the day of your joy’—these ‘days’ refer to Shabbos. Only once Shabbos is over, if we still, *chas v’shalom*, be in a situation of “and we were not redeemed”<sup>50</sup>, then we will have to keep the halachic traditions of mourning, but even then, these acts should not interfere with the special joy associated with learning Torah and doing mitzvos, concerning which it says, “Hashem’s Orders are just, they make the heart joyous.”

“May it be Hashem’s Will that through the joy of mitzvos (that we will bring) into all aspects of our observance, we will merit, very soon to the “joy of all time on their heads”<sup>51</sup>, when these days will be transformed to be “happiness and joy and Yom Tov”<sup>52</sup> with the true and complete Redemption through the righteous Moshiach.”

During today’s Torah reading, at the end of the seventh *aliyah*, it is customary to rise for the reading of the final verse in the book of Bamidbar, after which the entire congregation (men, women, and children) calls out loudly and joyfully—“*Chazak, chazak, venischazeik!*” This shout symbolizes the strength of the Jewish people in all matters of Torah—with the additional benediction of a *chazakah* (a halachic status where a particular action performed thrice becomes a tendency).

The one who is called to the Torah for the seventh *aliyah* should join the rest of the congregation in proclaiming “*Chazak!*”. This is not considered an interruption in the reading, because it is considered part of the final verse’s reading process.

### CHAZAK NOW!

The Rebbe discusses<sup>53</sup> the confluence of *Shabbos Chazak* and the Three Weeks,

47) *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* of *Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5742

48) See above, under *farbrengens* on *Shabbos Parshas Pinchas*.

49) *Bamidbar* 10:10

50) *Yirmiyahu* 8:20

51) *Yirmiyahu* 35:10

52) *Zechariah* 8:19

53) See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5750 (transcribed in *Sefer Hasichos* 5750) and 5751 (*ibid.*, 5751)

and especially the completion of the fourth of the Torah's five books—which can be viewed as a completion of the whole Torah (for the fifth book, *Devarim*, is considered “Mishnah Torah”, a reiteration and catchall version of the previous G-d-given four books, rendered by Moshe himself). What is the connection? The call of “*Chazak, chazak venischazek!*” is a **three**-fold *chazakah* (in itself the strength that comes from a three-time recurrence) that gives us the power to transform the descent precipitated by the events of the **Three** Weeks into the greatest and most potent *chazakah* for Torah—its perfect observance which will culminate with the building of the **third** *Beis Hamikdash* with the coming of the geulah.

It is customary for the *gabbaim* to organize a special *farbrengen* on this Shabbos, beyond the ordinary Shabbos *farbrengen*. They should use this opportunity to discuss and encourage strengthening of all aspects of Torah and mitzvos.

On this Shabbos, it is customary to increase in *divrei Torah* and to rejoice at having completed an entire *sefer* of the five books of Torah and to make resolutions to increase in Torah study and to keep the mitzvos in the best possible way.

The Rebbe cautions<sup>54</sup>: “Strong encouragement is particularly necessary in this *shul* (770). It is necessary to clarify that the participants in the present *farbrengen* have not fulfilled their obligation of holding a special *farbrengen*. I am therefore forced to emphasize and encourage, because I do not want them to depend on me, claiming that due to the present *farbrengen* there will not be a special *farbrengen* held by the *gabbaim* in honor of *Shabbos Chazak*.”

The chapter of *Pirkei Avos* for this week is Perek Beis.

Shabbos ends at **9:18pm**.

Even once Shabbos is over, if you haven't yet davened Maariv with a *minyán*<sup>55</sup>, you may continue to eat meat and drink wine. This is because it's still considered Shabbos for you (and you still add *Retzei* to *bentching*).

### HAVDALAH

We make *Havdalah* over a cup of wine and give it to a boy to drink, who has reached the age of *chinuch* regarding brachos, but has not yet reached the age of mourning over Yerushalayim. Have in mind to be *motzie* the boy with *borei pri hagafen*. He should drink at least a full mouthful (his own). If there is no child, the person making *Havdalah* can drink the wine himself.

If you made the brachah on the wine with the intention of giving it to the little boy to drink, but he refused it, you must make a brachah of *borei pri hagafen* again to drink it yourself.

**Melaveh Malkah**, the meal of *Dovid malka moshicha*: Even those who

<sup>54</sup>) *Sichas Shabbos Parashas Vayechi* 5750

<sup>55</sup>) If you are davening without a *minyán*, and the majority of locals have already said Maariv, you must abstain, even if you didn't yet daven yourself.

customarily eat meat as part of *melaveh malkah* every *motzoei Shabbos*, should not eat meat during the Nine Days.<sup>56</sup>

## MONDAY, 4 MENACHEM-AV

On this day, Nechemia and those who went up to Eretz Yisrael with him began to build the walls of Yerushalayim.

## TUESDAY, 5 MENACHEM-AV

Today is the *yahrtzeit-hilula* of the Arizal, referred to in sources as “Arizal HaChai” (living). His *hilula* was in the year 5332

In the beginning of the *Hayom Yom*, one of the Rebbe’s innovations are stated as follows: “In the year 5736 (a spur is on) to add in giving *tzedakah* before davening (Shacharis and Mincha) in connection with the auspicious day of the fifth of Av, the passing of the Arizal, along with inspiration to add in learning the the Arizal’s Torah.”

In many talks and letters, the Rebbe encourages us to learn from Arizal’s conduct. This day (of his *yahrtzeit*) is an opportunity to meditate on his ways. The fact that his actions are knowable to the public, along with stories that even children can learn from, is proof that it is applicable to us and we are obligated to direct *Yiddishe* children in his manner.

The direction we should take is both in matters of ‘justice’, which refers to learning Torah, as well as ‘*tzedakah*’ (as in the *possuk* from Navi: “Tzion will be redeemed with justice and returned with *tzedakah*”). Especially, we must add, with even more strength, in learning the inner aspect of Torah, which is the Arizal’s forte, and with regard to performing mitzvos, also according to the Arizal’s teachings. Doing so will effect change not only qualitatively (through comprehending unrealized depth) but also quantitatively (by inspiring us to do more).

The same applies to the second aspect, ‘*tzedakah*’. Both these ideas (learning and giving) were especially emphasized by the Arizal. These, he performed with no limitations, without a speck of miserliness—for he would place his hand in his pocket and remove a fistful of coins to give away for *tzedakah*, or to pay for a mitzvah-item, without ever counting what he’d retrieved.

These can be much enhanced with other lessons of the Arizal’s life.

**Simchah shel mitzvah:** It is said that he merited Divine inspiration (*ruach hakodesh*) on account of his joy in fulfilling mitzvos.

**Ahavas Yisroel:** His commitment to love his fellow Jew. Indeed, it is his directive that led to the addition of the introductory statement of “*Hareini mekabel... ve’ahavta l’reiacha kamocha*” before *tefillah*.

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56) Bypassing their custom during the Nine Days does not require *hataras nedarim*.

**Hafatzas Hama'ayanos:** The revelation of the inner aspect (*pnimius*) of Torah began with the Arizal; in fact this was his entire mission, which will culminate in the coming of Moshiach, as recorded in the Baal Shem Tov's letter to his brother-in-law: "I entered the chamber of Moshiach (on High) and asked, 'Master, when are you coming?'" (and he answered:) "When your wellsprings spread forth to the outside."

According to different directives over the years, it has become the custom for a group effort to learn from the Arizal's Torah, daven, and give tzedakah at his gravesite—and all over the world in honor of his *yahrtzeit/hilula*.

**Law of the Redemption:** Specific families merited to donate wood annually for use on the altar, as described in *Meseches Ta'anis*<sup>57</sup>. On the fifth of Menachem Av (and on the first of Teves), the family of Parosh, son of Yuda, donated wood. They were descendents of Dovid Hamelech.

## THURSDAY, 7 MENACHEM-AV

### BREECH NUMBER 2,445

On this date, the Rebbe explains: When the Gemara reminds us that the seventh of Av is the day that "outsiders entered the *Heichal*", the intention is not, *chas v'shalom*, to bring us pain and anguish. The *Chachamim* would be extra careful to avoid causing such a reaction with regard to small details, so how much more so is this true of a national tragedy, one that, when we take into account that there is a (spiritual) recurrence of the event every anniversary, the outsiders have infiltrated over 1900 times!

What the Gemara does intend is to fire us up in redoubling our efforts, through our service of Hashem, to bring the *geulah* and the rebuilding of the third *Beis Hamikdash* that much quicker. This is, in addition to the special efforts that are engendered by having come through the Three Weeks, and subsequent to that, the more concentrated effort that ensued when we reached the more serious period of the Nine Days, starting from Rosh Chodesh Av, which intensifies even more the closer we get to *Tishah B'av*... until we reach the seventh of Av, the day that the outsiders breached the *Beis Hamikdash* and entered its holy chamber.

It states in the Midrash, concerning the phenomenon of the *Churban*, that "Ari (a lion, referring to Nevuchadnezzar, who is compared to a lion in Navi Yirmiyahu) rose up and destroyed (the *Beis Hamikdash*, which is called, in the Navi Yeshayahu) *Ariel*, in order that (one day) the Ari (Hashem, Who is compared to a lion in the Navi Amos) will come and rebuild *Ariel*."

The lesson regarding (the general events) of the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* is applied also to the event of this particular day: At the times when we recall the tragedies "for these days recur and are remembered every year"<sup>58</sup> and we realize that another year has gone by; another day, and yet an additional day is gone, and still

57) 4:5

58) Megillah 9:28

“we have not merited (the *geulah*)”, and this day that has passed is not just a regular day in *golus*, but it is a day on which some particular terrible event occurred—in this case, the seventh of Av, when “outsiders breached the *Heichal*”, we must recognize that this is, to quote the Midrash, “**in order that**” *Yidden* should be given an extra boost of strength and reinforcement to make a deep, personal remonstrance from the depths of the heart that we’ve had enough! It is past time for the actual fulfillment of the promise that the “*Ari* (Hashem) will rebuild *Ariel*”, the construction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, with the true and complete Redemption through the coming (the son of) Dovid, *Melech Hamoshiach*!

## FRIDAY, 8 MENACHEM-AV

### Erev Shabbos Parshas Devarim

#### SHABBOS PREPS

*Shnayim mikra* is recited for this week’s *parshah*, *Parshas Devarim*. Men use the *mikveh*, as is customary every *erev Shabbos*.

The restriction on Torah learning on *Tishah B’av* when it falls on Shabbos and the fast is postponed is a matter of halachic debate (see the discussion under tomorrow’s entry). However, according to all opinions, there are no limitations on *erev Shabbos*, even after midday.

Exchange your weekday attire for Shabbos clothes, as is customary on every *Shabbos Chazon*. You may dress for Shabbos at any time past *chatzos* (midday at **1:01 pm**), as you would do any *erev Shabbos*. The same applies to setting the Shabbos table with a clean tablecloth. There is no need to wait until right before Shabbos.

You may shower with hot water and soap in honor of Shabbos and clip your fingernails.

#### FLEISHIGS

To adjust seasoning, as much is necessary, you may taste *fleishig* Shabbos dishes by swishing the food in your mouth, without swallowing.

You may also feed young children *fleishigs* within an hour or two of Shabbos even if they are above the age of *chinuch* (six years old), if they are accustomed to having a “dinner hour” on a long *erev Shabbos* and not waiting until the post-Maariv meal late at night.

Light candles today at **7:48 pm** (eighteen minutes before sunset).

**Note:** All halachic times in this guide are for Crown Heights **only**. Remember to check your local times for Shabbos (midday, earliest Minchah, sunset and the conclusion of Shabbos) before Shabbos begins.

## SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVARIM, 9 MENACHEM-AV

### Shabbos Chazon & Tishah B'av Nidcheh

Since Tishah B'av falls on Shabbos this year, the fast is postponed (*nidcheh*) to Sunday, the tenth of Av (may it be deferred forever).

Overt signs of mourning are forbidden on Shabbos. However, those practices that are not public are maintained, including *harchakos* for married couples.<sup>59</sup> There is a halachic dispute whether hot water (obviously, prepared before Shabbos) can be used for washing hands.

“How do we act on Shabbos that is erev Tishah B'av or Tishah B'av itself?” the Rebbe asks<sup>60</sup> in 5741. “It is well-known how careful we must be (as is evidenced by the halachos that eschew public mourning) that we do not outwardly change any of our regular *Shabbosdik* activities.”

As recorded in the Gemara Megillah,<sup>61</sup> Rebbe attempted to abolish the fast of *Tishah B'av* that fell on Shabbos and was postponed. He said, “Come, let this postponement be further postponed (and we will not reinstate the fast at all this year). But the Sages did not agree.

### SHABBOS CHAZON

It is from the *Haftorah* that this Shabbos gets its name: *Shabbos Chazon*, and it means “Shabbos of Vision”. The inner meaning of what we behold on this Shabbos is explained with the well-known statement of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev, quoted by Rabbi Hillel of Paritch, that on *Shabbos Chazon*, “each and every Jewish person is shown the future Beis Hamikdash from afar.”

Reb Levi Yitzchok explains this with the following parable: A father had a precious garment made for his beloved son. The father then gave this garment to his son to wear, but the son was careless and eventually caused the garment to be torn to shreds.

The father then made his son a second such garment, which the son soon brought to the same tattered state.

What did the father do then? He made a third garment but did not give it to his son to wear; he instead concealed the garment, and only at specific intervals he would

59) Excluding those for whom Friday night is *mikveh* night.

60) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Chazon*. See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos* 5714; *Matos-Maasei* 5733 (excerpts of these *sichos* appear under the entry for *Shabbos Mevorchim Av* in Part I of Day-to-Day Guide for the Three Weeks).

61) 5:2. Chassidus explains (see Hebrew references) that he wanted to eliminate it permanently—some sources say that he would do this by announcing the time of Moshiach's arrival. Others reference the Midrash about Moshiach being born on *Tishah B'av*. That very day, Rebbe, who was from *malchus beis Dovid* felt that the birth of a male relative (which is a harbinger of healing for all family members) was a sign that the *geulah* was near. However, the other *Chachamim* did not feel this way, and they outmaneuvered the abolishment of the fast. The Rebbe points out with regard to this incident that Rebbe a student of the Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (who is well-known to have been on such a high spiritual level that he did not experience the *Churban*) and cites this as a reason for his wish to abolish *Tishah B'av*.

display it to his son—telling him that should he conduct himself correctly, he will be allowed to wear this wonderful garment...

The reason for this vision is to arouse a stirring for the third *Beis Hamikdash* within each of us. That, in turn, causes a closer and deeper adherence to Torah and mitzvos, and an awareness that doing so causes Hashem to physically grant us the future *Beis Hamikdash* all the sooner.

In many *sichos*, the Rebbe explains deeper meanings of this vision. The Rebbe also encourages us to publicize this teaching of Reb Levi Yitzchok of Berditchev in his name.<sup>62</sup>

On that occasion, the Rebbe also says that someone who claims (or is under the impression) that they do not see these visions, they should be aware that it is merely due to the concealment caused by their *yetzer hara*, or similar, which does not alter the true reality that they are shown this vision. This is because the *mazal* of a Jew's *neshamah* (i.e., the root of the soul that remains in the upper realms) sees this vision, and influence from the *mazal* then flows into the part of the soul that resides within the body, affecting the *neshamah* that is inside and even the body itself!

**Kabbalas Shabbos:** We sing *Lecha Dodi* in the manner of every other Shabbos during the year—and even with added *simchah*.<sup>63</sup>

### SHACHARIS

Men who are accustomed to visiting the *mikveh* each *Shabbos* morning, may do so on this *Shabbos*.

A mnemonic device for the order of the *parshios* at this time is *Tzumu V'Tzulu*: “Fast and (then) pray”, so *Tishah B'av* precedes *Parshas V'eschanan* (“And I beseeched Hashem...”) each year. This is apropos for reading *Parshas Devarim*, which is the start of Moshe's rebuke, before *Tishah B'av*, and that topic coinciding with the *Haftorah* of *Chazon*, the *navi* Yeshayahu's rebuke concerning the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

According to *Sefer Haminhagim*, the *Kohen's aliyah* should stop one *possuk* earlier than indicated, so that the second *aliyah* should not begin with the word “*Eichah*” (the same opening word to the *megillah* of mourning the *Churban* read on *Tishah B'av*). However, for quite a few years, this has not been the practice in 770.

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62) *Parshas Devarim* 5749: The teaching and parable of Reb Levi Yitzchak is brought in the teachings of Reb Hillel of Paritch, who passed away on the eleventh of Menachem Av 5624. *Parshas Devarim* 5748: The very act of publicizing a teaching in the name of its original author is itself bound with the Redemption – for “All who state a matter in the name of its author brings redemption to the world.”

This was revealed specifically through Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev (see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p. 30) whose theme was to affect the redemption of the Jews from both their individual exiles and also from their general Exile. This is [even] alluded to in his name ‘Levi Yitzchak’... (*Parshas Devarim* 5749). Many of his explanations reveal the inner goodness that is to be found within words of rebuke.

63) As usual: See *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos* 5714 (*Sichos Kodesh*, p. 363 ff). With added joy: See also *Sichas Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5733. Excerpts of both *sichos* appear under the entry for *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem Av* in Part 1 of the Day-to-Day Guide.

**EICHAH 2.0**

The Rebbe explains<sup>64</sup>: In the future time of Moshiach there will be a transformation of the *Eichah* of the second *aliyah* of *Parshas Devarim*. Moshe *Rabbeinu*'s complaint of “*Eichah*—Oy! How can I alone carry (your burdens)?” will become instead, an appreciation: Moshe (who is our first and last redeemer) will look at the multitudes of *Yidden*, including those from all previous generations who return with the Revival of the Dead, and exclaim, “Wow! Look how I alone carry...”

The *Maftir* (and *Haftorah* reading) is dignified with the Rav or another important leader of the community. The tune of the *Haftorah* is the same as the rest of the year.

On a few occasions, the Rebbe quotes Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev in reinterpreting the verses of this *Haftorah* (not as rebuke but) in a favorable light. For example, the possuk, עַם כְּבֵד עֵץ, “a nation whose sins are heavy” would instead read: “a nation for whom (even the concept of) sinning is difficult”—because they do not have the temperament or scope for it, it is a challenge to understand the concept of sin, even concerning one errant thought.

*Av Harachamim* is recited after reading the Torah.

The Nine-Day *siyum* initiative includes Shabbos as well. The *siyum* should then be celebrated with a festive meal.

**SEUDAH**

It is a *minhag* on *erev Tishah B'av*, even when it is a weekday, to wash for an afternoon meal before *Minchah* and to add in this meal as well (certainly when it's the Shabbos *seudah*).<sup>65</sup>

**SHABBOS AFTERNOON LEARNING**

There are differing opinions regarding Torah study on *Shabbos* that is *erev Tishah B'av*. After *chatzos* (midday) at **1:01 pm**, it is proper to study only those topics that are permitted on *Tishah B'av*.<sup>66</sup> Make an effort to complete your regular daily studies such as *Chitas* and *Rambam* before *chatzos*. If you failed to complete them before that time, you may do so anytime before *shki'ah* (sunset). Similarly, you may complete *shnayim mikra* until *shki'ah*, and hold regularly scheduled public classes and *farbrengens*.

Regarding learning *Mishnayos* before *Kaddish* by those in their year of mourning,

64) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, 5743

65) From the *Ramah*—so we fast well. The *Magen Avraham* writes an additional reason: During the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, this afternoon was considered a *Yom Tov*, and a time for *karbonos* and feasting. (Others source this *minhag* as a celebration of Moshiach's birth on *Tishah B'av*.) Even though the second *Beis Hamikdash* was subsequently destroyed again this custom endured, to remind us that very soon we too will have these days transformed to happiness and joy. (See Hebrew footnotes for an in-depth discussion of why we perpetuate this *minhag* when *erev Tishah B'av/Tishah B'av* are on *Shabbos*.)

66) See details about what is permitted or not below in the laws of *Tishah B'av*.

the Rebbe once issued a letter supporting their recital as usual on this *Shabbos*.

The Rebbe Rashab would regularly recite a *maamar* on *Shabbos*. One year, on a *Tishah B'av nidcheh*, he still said a *maamar* on Friday night (as usual). Review of the *maamar* took place after the *seudah hamafsekes* and lasted into the nighttime hours.

We do not take strolls for pleasure on this *Shabbos*.

### MINCHAH

Minchah is scheduled earlier than on a regular *Shabbos* in order to leave adequate time for the *seudah hamafsekes*. Earliest Mincha is at **1:37 pm**.

Omit *Tzidkasecha Tzedek* during Minchah.

The Rebbe stated that he is declining to issue a directive in regard to saying *Pirkei Avos*, usually recited after Minchah on *Shabbos* at this time of the year. It seems that *Anash* generally avoids reciting it on this *Shabbos*.<sup>67</sup>

### SEUDAH HAMAFASEKES

A *seudah hamafsekes* is eaten in the afternoon, prior to the fast, even though it is *Shabbos*. It is also customary to increase your intake during the first meal (even during the weekday, and certainly at the *Shabbos seudah*).

During the *seudah hamafsekes*, eat whatever you desire, including meat and wine; you may even prepare a “royal feast,” in a way that exceeds the repast of every other *Shabbos*.

Do **not** eat the customary egg and ashes, or to sit on low chairs. Recite *Birchas Hamazon* with a *zimun*.

It is brought in *sefarim* to avoid eating licorice root (the naturally growing vegetable, not the artificially flavored candy) on erev *Tishah B'av*. Since it leaves a sweet residue in the mouth, a person will continue to ingest it during the fast when they swallow their saliva.

If you take pills designed to help you fast easily, there is room to be lenient to do so on this *Shabbos*. However, it is best to premix them into food before *Shabbos* and then eat that dish before the onset of the fast.

Try to avoid explicitly stating that you are eating in order to have the strength to fast the next day.

The general rules of a *seudah hamafsekes* require you stipulate prior to *bentching* your intention to eat or drink after the conclusion of the meal, before the onset of the fast. On *Shabbos*, however, this requirement does not apply and you may eat or drink until *shki'ah* regardless.

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67) Someone who followed the opinion to recite *perek* this week (Chapter 3), repeats it next *Shabbos* regardless.

Stop eating or drinking **before shki'ah** (sunset) at **8:05 pm**. The laws of *Tisha B'av* that prohibit eating, drinking and washing hands apply from *shki'ah*.<sup>68</sup> You should make people aware of this fact, so that no one will assume they can continue in these activities until the conclusion of Shabbos (nightfall).

Do not remove your leather footwear until after the conclusion of Shabbos (**8:51 pm**). Likewise, do not sit on a low stool until after the conclusion of Shabbos. Nor should we prepare or arrange the books of *Kinos* or non-leather footwear before the conclusion of Shabbos. Our custom is to continue wearing our Shabbos clothes until getting home after *Eichah*.

If you forgot to recite *Birchas Hamazon* after your *seudah hamafsekes*, you may do so even after dark. Say *Retzei*, but not *Nachem* (even if the fast has already begun).

Shabbos ends at **8:51 pm**.

## MOTZOEI SHABBOS KODESH, 10 AV—TISHAH B'AV NIDCHEH

**May this day be transformed to a day of happiness and joy—“True joy will only come on *Tishah B'av*”<sup>69</sup>**

Five events of national tragedy occurred on *Tishah B'av*: 1. The Jewish nation was banned from entering *Eretz Yisroel*, and forty years of wandering the desert commenced. 2. The first *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed by the Babylonian king Nevuchadnezzar. 3. The second *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed by the Roman general Titus. 4. The stronghold of Beitar fell at the hands of the Romans, and the Jewish leader Ben Kuziva (who was presumed Moshiach) and tens of thousands of the Jews taking refuge there were massacred. 5. The site of the *Beis Hamikdash* was razed by the *rasha* Tinus-Rufus, in fulfillment of the words of the *navi*,<sup>70</sup> “Tzion will be plowed like a field.”

In numerous sources, starting with the famous *navi*,<sup>71</sup> “the fast of the fifth month will be transformed to a day of joy”, we learn that not only will *Tishah B'av* cease to be a fast day, it will become a great Yom Tov—greater than all the festivals established until now, and the greatest among the fasts that will be converted to *yomim tovim* as well.

Today (the tenth of Av), as a *Tishah B'av nidcheh*, will G-d willing also be celebrated as a joyful Yom Tov, with the arrival of Moshiach, immediately.

68) As do *harchakos* for married couples.

69) Commentary on Tehillim 137: “Currently it is a time of mourning but in the future Hashem will turn it into a Yom Tov, as it says in Navi Yirmiyahu.” The *Kedushas Levi* (and others) on the saying of *Chazal*: One who mourns Yerushalayim will merit (*zocheh*) to see it in its joy”. The term *zocheh* can also mean to clarify (remove impurities)—with the right attitude we can see the joy even now; some level of the future happiness can be experienced as we anticipate the *geulah*.

70) Michah 3:12

71) Zechariah 8:19

## JOY, TODAY!

The Rebbe writes: I hope you will not suspect me of being reproachful and giving *mussar*, my only intent with these words is to issue them as a challenge that will hopefully have the practical impact of growing another Jew's *bitachon* and joy. There is a well-known Chassidic *vort* concerning the *possuk*, "Serve Hashem with joy"—that it applies even on *Tishah B'av* (may it be immediately transformed to happiness and joy with Moshiach's arrival). This means, that when a person fasts and says *Kinos*, it is also done with a joyful attitude, that of, "How lucky I am that I have the opportunity to fulfill the instructions of the King of all kings, Hashem." As the Rambam rules at the end of the *Hilchos Lulav*, that we should distance ourselves from a person who eschews joy. And of one who actively pursues it, (he says:) This is a high level of service of Hashem. (See the details there.<sup>72</sup>)

The Talmud Yerushalmi states that on the day of *Tishah B'av*, when the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed, *Melech Hamoshiach* was born. Since on the day of a birthday a person's *mazal* is predominant, it follows that this is an especially propitious time for salvation and Redemption. This idea has halachic ramifications, as we find in the writings of Rabbi Chaim Vital (in the name of the Arizal): "this is the reason we say *Nachem* in the *Amidah* of *Minchah*...because at the time of *Minchah* on *Tishah B'av*, Moshiach was born, and he is called Menachem."

The Rebbe has also suggested that it is on the strength of this event (Moshiach's birth) that *Tishah B'av* (even now in *golus*) goes by the term "*mo'ed*".

In *sefarim* it is mentioned that the days of *Bein Hametzarim*, between the seventeenth of Tammuz and *Tishah B'av*, parallel the days between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Hoshanah Rabba*, and *Tishah B'av* is like *Shemini Atzeres* (and *Simchas Torah*). We also find that the first nine days of the month of Av (the Nine Days) are directly aligned with all the days of *Sukkos*, and *Tishah B'av* is *Simchas Torah* itself.

The entire time of *Tishah B'av* should be focused on our mourning of the *Churban* without distraction. "One who mourns Yerushalayim will merit to see its joy" say *Chazal*, as it says in the *possuk* in *navi*,<sup>73</sup> "Rejoice with her... all who mourned her." At the same time, however, we are forbidden to become depressed, *chas v'shalom*, for we are enjoined to<sup>74</sup> "serve Hashem with joy" at all times.

"We witnessed one of your great Chassidim wailing on *Simchas Torah* and singing on *Tishah B'av*!" a group of Lithuanian Jews complained to the Tzemach Tzedek (also adding a disclaimer about why their report should not be considered *lashon hara*). The Rebbe answered them: "For a Chossid, the *niggun* is not just about joy, nor is the crying on account of depression...on *Tishah B'av*, when a Chossid sees the devastation of the *Churban* fulfilled, he also experiences 'in every difficulty there is

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72) Chapter 8, Halachah 15 (translated by Rabbi E. Touger, published by *Moznaim*): The happiness with which a person should rejoice in the fulfillment of the mitzvos and the love of G-d who commanded them is a great service. Whoever holds himself back from this rejoicing is worthy of retribution, as [Devarim 28:47] states: "...because you did not serve God, your Lord, with happiness and a glad heart."

73) Yishayahu 66:10

74) Tehillim 100:2

gain<sup>75</sup> and his firm belief in the fulfillment of the promises of the *geulah* causes him to sing a *niggun* to ‘delight in Hashem!’<sup>76</sup>

### PROSCRIPTIONS

**Note:** Since this year, *Tishah B'av* falls on Shabbos and the fast is a *nidcheh*, the restrictions are thus divided: **From *shki'ah***—eating, drinking, washing and anointing are forbidden, and the restriction for married couples to keep the *harchakos* is in force. Only **once Shabbos is over**, do we remove leather footwear and sit on low chairs. All these (with the exception of seating rules) are in effect until nightfall at the conclusion of the fast.<sup>77</sup>

### FASTING

**Note:** Review the fasting rules of the seventeenth of Tammuz (in Part I of this series). Only those restrictions that differ (are stricter) on *Tishah B'av* are itemized here.

We may not eat or drink even the slightest quantity, although food may be handled.

Expectant and nursing mothers fast the entire *Tishah B'av*, the strictest of the Rabbinical fasts, just as on Yom Kippur. However, if a pregnancy is high-risk or difficult, or fasting causes an abnormal weakness or there is a possibility it may cause the milk to dry up, a woman may eat and drink what is essential.

A woman within thirty days of childbirth does not fast.

An ill person who is weak and must eat to sustain their body, is allowed to eat and drink, even if the illness is not life-threatening.

Children do not need to fast.

The custom for a *bris* that takes place on *Tishah B'av* is that the father, *mohel* and *sandek* still fast (even this year, when the fast is postponed). A minor child is given the wine to drink and the *seudah* takes place that night.

This year, since the fast is postponed from the actual date of observance, some leniencies may apply to override the usual level of stringency for Tisha B'av.<sup>78</sup> Consult a Rav if necessary.

Anyone who is exempt from fasting should eat the basic food needed to sustain them, and not indulge.

75) Mishlei 14:23

76) *Sefer Hasichos* 5703, pg. 41

77) even if Maariv is concluded earlier.

78) See Hebrew section for sources. Also discussed there in the footnote: a child who turns bar/bas mitzvah on the 10th of Av this year.

## BEFORE BREAKING FAST

If you are exempt from fasting, you must recite *Havdalah* before eating or drinking.<sup>79</sup> A woman who is not fasting may ask her husband to recite *Havdalah* for her even though he is fasting; in that case, he will have also fulfilled his own obligation for *Havdalah*. Following *Havdalah*, the cup should be given to a child who has reached the age of *chinuch* in reciting *brachos* to drink, as is customary during the Nine Days.

If a man is making *Havdalah* for his non-fasting wife, he must have intent to fulfill his obligation and have a **male** child drink the wine (even one older than *chinuch* who is not fasting, but not his wife). Otherwise, he is not *yotzei*. The same applies if he is making *Havdalah* to break his own fast. However, a woman who makes *Havdalah* for herself on wine **cannot** have a male child drink it. Since some opinions hold that women are not obligated in *Havdalah*, he cannot be *yotzei*, and a young **girl** should drink it.

If there is no child present, *Havdalah* may be recited over *chamar medinah* such as beer, coffee or tea (and a *Shehakol*, not *Hagafen* is said). Otherwise, the text of *Havdalah* is unchanged, except for the omission of the blessing over spices. The blessing over a flame is included only when *Havdalah* is recited on *motzoei Shabbos* and if the blessing had not been recited on its own earlier that night.

If a non-faster eats a meal and recites *Birchas Hamazon*, they should include the *Nachem* prayer (it appears in the Mincha *Amidah*) before the *brachah* of *Uv'nei Yerushalayim*, and should conclude the paragraph with “*Baruch...menachem tzion uvoneh Yerushalayim.*”

**Smoking:** Although smoking is not expressly forbidden on a fast day for someone who smokes regularly, on *Tishah B'av*, the strictest of all fasts, it is best to abstain. Even heavy smokers who are suffering from withdrawal should restrict themselves to lighting up only at home, in private. And among those *poskim* who do permit it (in private) on the basis of need, many say the leniency applies only after midday (*chatzos*). People who are particularly conscientious will not smoke at all on *Tishah B'av*. However, all the above applies to compulsive smokers; there is no leniency for social smokers, for whom abstaining has little or no physical effect.<sup>80</sup> In this era of awareness of the extreme dangers of smoking, it should be avoided year-round.

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<sup>79</sup> Someone who is only eating less than the *shiur* (a *koseves*, an amount somewhat less than the volume of two matchboxes) for whatever reason, should still make *Havdalah* and have a child drink the wine; if there is no child, they may eat the small amount of food without making *Havdalah*. See more on this topic in the Hebrew footnote.

There are various opinions as to whether a child needs to make *Havdalah* for themselves before eating post-Shabbos.

<sup>80</sup> From the halachic sources: “Someone who cares for their (spiritual) life, will avoid smoking on all public fasts, how much more so on *Tishah B'av*, the strictest of all.” Also, “One who smokes on *Tishah B'av* should be ostracized from the community!”

## WASHING UP

Washing the body is forbidden, in cold or hot water.<sup>81</sup> Rinsing the mouth is also prohibited.

For the morning *netilas yadayim*, wash until the end of your knuckles. Once your fingers are mostly dry, you can wipe your eyes. (If eyes are crusty, and you usually rinse to remove the buildup, you may do so, sparingly, today.)

You may soak a washcloth before *Tishah B'av* begins (this year, this must be on Friday), and once it is removed and squeezed or hung out until it is only slightly damp,<sup>82</sup> it may be used on *Tishah B'av* to wipe a face, hands or feet. Disposable wipes, if they are similarly dryish, may also be used.

Even those who strictly use the *mikveh* daily, may not dip today.

If you touch a part of the body that is normally kept covered, scratch your scalp, or touch your shoes (this applies to non-leather as well<sup>83</sup>) you should wash your fingers until the knuckles. When visiting the bathroom, touch private areas and wash your hands as described.<sup>84</sup> If you are about to *daven*, wash your hands in this manner even if you did not touch a covered area. If you normally wash each hand three times, you may do so today, but only until the knuckles.

If sullied with dirt or excrement, wash the affected area only.

An ill person washes in their ordinary manner.

A new bride, within thirty days of her wedding, may wash her face on *Tishah B'av*. (She is also exempt from the prohibition on anointing and cosmetics outlined below).

While preparing food, those who need to rinse off meat (or produce or the like) may run them under the tap as usual, despite the fact that they are simultaneously washing their hands.

Someone who must break their fast and is eating a meal, should wash *netilas yadayim* until their wrists. They should also wash *mayim acharonim* when concluding a meal.

## ANOINTING

Smearing oils, creams, gels and balms for enjoyment is forbidden. This includes perfume, make-up powder, and other cosmetic unguents.

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81) A woman who needs to perform a *hefsek taharah* on *Tisha B'av* afternoon should do it differently from her usual (and more restrictively than during the Nine Days). She should wash only the pelvic area and between her thighs with lukewarm or warm water.

82) If it is moist enough to wet something else, you may **not** use it.

83) After putting on **new** *Tishah B'av* shoes for the first time ever, you do not need to wash your hands.

84) If you entered the bathroom and left with clean hands, without actually using the facilities, you should not wash them. You can rub them off on some surface (like a stone or wall), even if you are usually stringent about washing.

Using ointments for the purpose of removing or absorbing grime or sweat is permitted. Wearing deodorant is therefore allowed. You may also use bug repellent on your body, as well as sunscreen, hand sanitizer and medicinal creams.

### FOOTWEAR

It is forbidden to wear leather footwear, even if the inside is synthetic, and only the outside is leather. Chabad *minhag* does not follow the opinion that bans rubber galoshes and the like.

A woman within thirty days of childbirth, an ill person who finds cold floors particularly uncomfortable, or someone with a foot injury are permitted to wear regular footwear. However, they still should invite some discomfort such as switching the right shoe for the left, if feasible. Nowadays, where non-leather shoes are easily obtainable, and comfortable, a person should not seek to be lenient in this area.

Children should also wear non-leather footwear, even very young children who have not reached the age of *chinuch* (to understand the concepts behind acts of mourning). Since man-made options are widely available, it is appropriate to make them aware of this prohibition.

In inclement weather, a sensitive person—someone who easily catches cold or whose health may be in danger—who needs to walk outside (such as going to shul or back home from shul) but has no proper footwear, may don their leather shoes until reaching shelter.

**Harchakos:** Married couples must observe all *harchakos* throughout *Tishah B'av*, from *shki'ah* the day before until the fast ends.<sup>85</sup>

### TORAH LEARNING

“Hashem’s Orders are just, they gladden the heart,”<sup>86</sup> and we are therefore restricted from reading Tanach and studying Mishnah, Midrash and Gemara—both the halachic and Aggadic parts, even avoiding giving lessons to small children. However, we may read *Iyov*, the rebuke of *Yirmiyahu* and other tragic tracts, skipping over the comforting verses. It is permissible to learn the Midrash on *Eichah*, and the halachos of mourning, as well as other commentary on *Eichah* and *Iyov*. In this category are also stories of the *Churban* and other national tragedies. We may share these stories with children who have reached the age of understanding.

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85) A woman who is meant to visit the *mikveh* on *motzoei Shabbos* postpones it to the following night. If possible, she should do a few of her preparations on Friday, taking care to remain without *chatzitzah* over *Shabbos* and *Tishah B'av*, by not walking around barefoot and the like. On *motzoei Tishah B'av* she prepares again. However, if she was not able to prepare on Friday at all, she may still go to the *mikveh* after the fast, but must spend at least an hour on her preps.

You may perform a *hefsek taharah* on *Tishah B'av* in a restricted manner, see above with regard to washing.

86) *Tehillim* 19:9

According to some opinions, we should not even **think** about subjects not in the purview of mourning and the *Churban*.

Those subjects that are permissible should be studied in a straightforward manner, and not through *pilpul* (halachic analysis), homiletics or in question/answer format, for all these are enjoyable modes of learning.

You may read all parts of *tefillah*, including *Krias Shema* (from Torah) and *Korbanos* (from Torah and Mishnah) and “*Rabi Yishmael Omer*”. The Torah reader may review the *kriah* for the day, even the portion that he will only have to read later at Minchah time.

### SIYUM

The Nine-Day *siyum* initiative should continue into Tishah B'av as well, in a way that is permissible, by completing subjects that may be learned at this time, like *Maseches Moed Katan* or *Maseches Semachos*.

Even when Moshiach is here, we will still make a *siyum* on *Tishah B'av*.<sup>87</sup> We will do so in Moshiach's presence, with great joy, accompanied by a most extravagant feast of meat and wine.<sup>88</sup> Since Moshiach will surely be here before *Tishah B'av*, this day will also be the greatest of *yomim tovim*, so, of course, the rejoicing and partaking will be tremendous. It will be a *siyum* on our *golus* Torah learning, for that mode will become outdated, trailing in the dust of the “new” (dimensions of) Torah of Moshiach!<sup>89</sup>

Every year on *Tishah B'av*, the Rebbe Rashab would study *Eichah Rabbah* and the *sugya* of “Rabbi Yochanan” in *Maseches Gittin*.

### CHASSIDUS

It is appropriate to learn those topics that are **timely**, as *Chazal* tell us. The Rebbe refers specifically to the notes of the Tzemach Tzedek on *Megillas Eichah*. There,<sup>90</sup> the Rebbe also talks all about the great advantage of learning the inner aspect of Torah (Chassidus) on *Tishah B'av*.

The Frierdiker Rebbe relates<sup>91</sup> that he saw his father (the Rebbe Rashab) learning Chassidus on *Tishah B'av*, but it seemed like he was only skimming the text.

It is told in the name of Reb Hillel of Paritch,<sup>92</sup> that learning Kabbalah is permitted on *Tishah B'av*, “for the secrets of Torah are only transmitted to a person with a worrying heart.”

87) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av*, 5735

88) *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*, 5743

89) *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, vol. 2, pg. 579. See fn. 190 there.

90) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, pg. 250 (From a *sichah* in 5730).

91) *Sefer Hasichos*, 5690 pg. 134

92) Quoted in *Nesiv Hachaim*.

On Sunday, 10 Av, 5751 (a postponed fast), the Rebbe said a *sichah* before Maariv.<sup>93</sup>

”These restrictions on *Tishah B’av*,” the Rebbe clarified the following year,<sup>94</sup> “apply to some very specific aspects of Torah learning, but those subjects that are authorized, it is obvious that (it’s not just recommended, but) we are completely obligated in their study and we gain great merit when we do so. So, on the contrary, *Tishah B’av* becomes a day when we seek out solutions on how to remove all restrictions and ultimately transform it “to days of happiness and joy and good time,” as was done last year *Tishah B’av*.”

The Rebbe explains<sup>95</sup>, “Even on *Tishah B’av* in *golus* (as we were last year, but will, G-d willing no longer be this year) when you are **forbidden** to read Tanach, (and there are so many restrictions on what you may learn) you are still **required to learn Torah every moment!** How? By studying those subjects and aspects of Torah that are appropriate for a day like this.”

### SAYING HELLO

It is forbidden to greet another on *Tishah B’av* with “Shalom!” or “Hello!”. This includes other greetings in the same spirit, like “good morning!” or “*shavuah tov* (Have a great week!)”, as we normally do on *motzoei Shabbos*. If you are greeted by someone who is unaware of this restriction, you should respond in a subdued voice and inform them that we do not greet people today.

However, non-greeting wishes are permitted, like to bless someone with a long life, or “get well!” and the like. “*Mazal tov!*” is also not considered a restricted salutation.

We do not bestow gifts on *Tishah B’av*. However, we may give gifts to a poor person (especially one who is a *talmid chacham*) and, all the more so, when giving them money to provide for their family. In fact, it’s a mitzvah; in every Jewish community it is customary to increase *tzedakah* to the poor on *Tishah B’av*.

**Excursions:** Do not aimlessly go on walks today, or browse in stores, for these activities are recreational, and invite twaddle and laughter.

### SEATING

We do not sit on chairs (or benches, sofas or stools) of normal height from the evening of *Tishah B’av* (once Shabbos is over) until *chatzos* the next day, at **1:02 pm**. Traditionally, mourners would sit on the floor with a cushion or mat.<sup>96</sup> But these also qualify: low stools, upside-down chairs, kiddie chairs, couch frames with the cushions removed and other low seating with the seat less than three *tefachim* (about nine to ten inches) off the ground.

93) The *sichah* is recorded in *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, pg. 721, and it’s noted there: At 8:35 pm the Rebbe Shlita entered shul, and started to speak...

94) *Roshei Devarim* of the the *sichah* of the second day of Sukkos, 5752.

95) *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, pg. 574 ff.

96) According to Kabbalah, we may not sit directly on the floor; an intervening object (not just the clothes on your body) should be used, at the very least.

A person who is ill or weak, an expectant or nursing mother (while she nurses) may sit on a chair of regular height. If traveling by car, you may also sit as normal (although some would use a hard seat or plank of wood to sit on). A *sandak* at a *bris* sits on a seat of normal height, as does the person who is raising the Torah by *kriah* (when he sits down to have it tied and dressed).

Reb Pinchas of Koritz says,<sup>97</sup> “On *Tishah B'av*, when we sit on the ground, we can obtain everything we wish for from Hashem. For on this level too He is found.”

### MELACHAH

We do not do *melachah* (involved work) until *chatzos* (1:02 pm.) Someone with stellar *yiras Shomayim* stringently avoids work throughout the day.

What qualifies as *melachah*, in this context, is creative work that requires some “puttering” (steps and process), even if it is not professional work. Using electricity, lighting a fire, or knotting an item in one step, for example, are permitted. Writing is also allowed.<sup>98</sup> If the project is in danger of being lost or ruined, *melachah* may be performed, but it may not be done in public. Construction, a form of work that cannot be kept quiet, is thus expressly forbidden.

Light housework is permitted as needed, even before *chatzos*. A non-Jew may do this work for a Jew, even in a Jewish home.

It is brought in sources that any money earned from work conducted on *Tishah B'av* will not be revenue for *brachah*. This refers specifically to someone who sets themselves up to attend to business and distracts themselves from the true purpose of the day, which is mourning the *Beis Hamikdash* (and praying for its reconstruction).

### TISHAH B'AV NIGHT

This year, Maariv is delayed past the normal time. Following nightfall, recite *Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol*, exchange your leather footwear for non-leather, and bring copies of *Kinos* to shul.

When exchanging shoes, try not to touch your Shabbos shoes or *Tishah B'av* shoes. If you did touch them, wash your hands only until the knuckles.<sup>99</sup>

It is our custom to wait until after reciting *Kinos* to exchange our Shabbos attire. However, once you have removed them at night, you may not put them back on, since we are forbidden to don Shabbos clothes on *Tishah B'av*, the laws of which are even stricter than the rest of the Nine Days (when we are restricted from dressing up).

<sup>97</sup>) *Sefer Imrei Pinchas*

<sup>98</sup>) Can a professional writer or editor work? *Poskim* are divided on the matter. Practically, it is restricted.

<sup>99</sup>) However, if your footwear is completely new, never-been-worn *Tishah B'av* shoes, you may handle them before putting them on and not wash your hands, as mentioned above.

Women who do not say Maariv are reminded not to perform any *melachah* (work forbidden on Shabbos) before reciting *Baruch Hamavdil bein kodesh l'chol*.

### MAARIV

The *paroches* is removed from the *Aron Kodesh*. The lights in the shul are dimmed (with only enough lighting as needed to read the *Kinos*).

Recite the blessing of *borei me'orei ha'eish* over a flame, as usual. It is customarily recited in shul before the reading of *Eichah*, unless a man needs to recite it at home for the sake of his household (especially if the women of the house generally follow the custom not to recite the blessing individually). We do not say the *brachah* on the spices.

An ill person who must eat on *Tishah B'av* should recite the blessing over the flame when reciting *Havdalah*. However, they do not recite a blessing over spices.<sup>100</sup>

If you did not recite the blessing over a flame, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

The *Ramah* writes that we should pray slowly and mournfully. *Eichah* is read this way, as well.

Recite *Atah chonantanu* during Maariv. If you forgot to recite it, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

After the Maariv *Amidah*, the *chazzan* recites *Kaddish tiskabel*, which is followed by *borei me'orei ha'eish*, *Eichah*, and then *Kinos*. Throughout, those who are sitting should sit low down (as described above). *Kinos* followed by *V'Atah Kadosh*, and then *Kaddish Shalem* without *tiskabel*. Do not recite *Vihi Noam*.

The *Ramak* writes<sup>101</sup>: On the night of *Tishah B'av* our sorrowful attitude can attract the attention of the *klipos* for a mourner is in a situation of danger, open to the effect of harmful spirits. In order to neutralize them, we mention the *geulah* (in the *tefillah* of *V'Atah Kadosh*), invoking a time when all evil will be nullified permanently.

### EICHAH & KINOS

During the reading of *Eichah* by the *chazzan*, with the congregation reading along quietly, he should pause between each *possuk*, with a longer break between one chapter and the next. The last *possuk* is read in a much louder voice. When the *chazzan* reaches this *possuk*, the congregation should first say it out loud, then the *chazzan*, then the congregation repeats it, as does the *chazzan*, at last.

"All my life I wondered," says the *Levush*, "why the *megillah* that we read in public on Purim is written on a beautiful scroll by expert scribes—should not the same that is done for Esther be required for us to fulfill our obligation of reading *Eichah*? But perhaps, this is the prevailing custom because the scribes don't want to write such a

100) See above, in the halachos concerning fasting, more details about *Havdalah* for non-fasters.

101) In his *Sefer Gerushin*.

scroll! We await Moshiach every day, a time when *Tishah B'av* will turn into a Yom Tov.

“If the *sofrim* would write Megillas Eichah in the same way as Megillas Esther,<sup>102</sup> it would seem that they have relented to *golus, chas v’shalom*. So here we are, forced to read Eichah from a Chumash...”

In a number of *sichos*, the Rebbe explains how in the notes of the Tzemach Tzedek on Megillas Eichah he shows how the rebuke can be interpreted in a positive light. “In the same manner that curses (of the Torah) are transformed to blessings, so can the verses of Eichah become praises.” In fact, Chassidus posits that the greatest blessings present as curses in the Torah.

We learn in the name of Reb Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev<sup>103</sup>: In the future, we will make a *brachah* of *Shehechyanu* when we read Megillas Eichah. We will read it slowly<sup>104</sup>—(not because we are suffering through it but) because we are struck in a good way—it is such a pleasurable reading that we become speechless.

Someone who *davens* Maariv without a *minyán* should read Eichah and *Kinos* on their own.

There is an addition to the *Kinos* for *motzoei Shabbos*, which begins “Eich...”

#### AFTER MAARIV

Someone who is saying *Kaddish* for a *yahrtzeit*, or is within the year of mourning, should say only those *Mishnayos* that are from the permissible sections of *Mesechtos Taanis* and *Mo’ed Katan* until *chatzos* tomorrow. The Mishna of Rabi Chananya is omitted as well. After *chatzos*, he follows the same schedule as other *shiurim*. On *Tishah B'av* we honor fixed *shiurim* as we do throughout the year, despite the limitations.<sup>105</sup>

We return home, leaving shul as if banished by Hashem. The mood is sorrowful, serious and introspective; as is fitting on *Tishah B'av*, we do not socialize. It is forbidden to exchange greetings, as mentioned above. Therefore, do not wish each other, “*a gutte voch*.”

Do not recite *Veyitein lecha* on this *motzoei Shabbos*.

If possible, delay washing the dishes from *Shabbos* until after *chatzos* the next day.

You should refrain from small pleasures and comforts as much as possible.

However, this instruction does not extend to sleeping on the ground or putting a rock under your head instead of a pillow.

102) for, unlike all other celebratory days, Purim will endure forever.

103) *Kedushas Levi Hashalem*, vol. 2, new *likkutim* for *Tishah B'av*, pg. 526

104) As mentioned above, we do this in *golus* as a show of mourning.

105) See below in the entry for tomorrow afternoon.

**SUNDAY, 10 AV****Tishah B'av Nidcheh****EARLY MORNING**

Morning *negel vasser* is poured only until the knuckles. The *brachah* of *al netilas yadayim* is said.

In morning *Brachos*, we skip the blessing of *she'asah li kol tzorki*.

No *brachah* is made on *tzitzis* this morning. A (married) man will don his *tallis* for Minchah, and make a *brachah* then (see below in the Minchah entry) In the case of an unmarried *bachur* or a child who will not wear a *tallis* at all that day, it might be halachically problematic to put on a new pair of *tzitzis* in the morning and not make a *brachah*. So he should wait to change the *tallis katan* until the afternoon, prior to Minchah, and make a *brachah* then.

**SHACHARIS**

We should arrive a little earlier than usual to shul. However, it is better to arrive a bit later and fill all the time until *chatzos* with *davening* and *Kinos*, than to start and finish earlier and leave too many unfulfilled morning hours.

*Tishah B'av* is called “*mo'ed*”, and therefore we do not say *Tachanun* and skip all sections of *tefillah* that we usually do in these circumstances. This designation is a sign of our firm belief that Hashem will transform this day to one of *Yom Tov* and joy. Indeed, the depth of the mourning and tragedy correlates exactly with the great heights of the eventual joy and festivity, like light that emerges from darkness. This day is also the birthday of *Moshiach*.<sup>106</sup>

The lighting in the shul remains low, and the two candles that are normally on the *chazzan's* table remain unlit.

Men do not don a *tallis* or *tefillin* to *daven* *Shacharis*, and it follows that they do not hold their *tzitzis* as usual during *Baruch she'amar* and *Krias Shema*. We otherwise say the weekday *Shacharis* as normal, including *Mizmor l'sodah*.<sup>107</sup> Only the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* and only during the repetition of the *Amidah*, between the blessings of *go'al Yisrael* and *Refa'einu*. If a *chazzan* mistakenly omits *Aneinu*, see the chart at the end of the booklet. The *chazzan* does not say *Birchas Kohanim* as part of his repetition.

**KRIAS HATORAH & KINOS**

Following the *chazzan's* repetition is half-*Kaddish*. We do not say *Tachanun* (as mentioned above) or *Selichos*. We take the *sefer Torah* out and read three *aliyos* beginning *Ki solid banim* in *Parshas Va'eschanan*, which speaks about

106) See more above, in the introductory *sichos* relating to the deeper meaning of *Tishah B'av*.

107) For in the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, a *Korban Todah* was offered on *Tishah B'av*.

the devastation of *Eretz Yisroel*. After half-*Kaddish*, we read *Asof asifem* (from Yirmiyahu) for the *Haftorah*, which concerns the *Churban*. The regular, year-round tune is used. Use a siddur to read the brachos of *Haftorah*, as the version that appears in the *Kinos* booklets are not according to *nusach Chabad*.

There is no *Mi shebeirach* said for those who receive an *aliyah* or for a new child, however a *Mi shebeirach* for the sick is said.

A bar mitzvah boy should receive his *aliyah* at Minchah time.

The one who lifts the Torah should sit on a regular-height seat while the Torah is wrapped, as mentioned.

After the Torah is read comes *Yehalelu* and the return of the *sefer Torah* to the Ark. The day *Kinos* are all recited, filling our time until just before *chatzos* (1:02 pm). Throughout the *Kinos*, we sit low down, and say the *Kinos* in a mournful, wailing tone.<sup>108</sup> We may not speak at all, nor leave the room, so as not to disturb our concentration and our emotional reaction to the *Churban*. Halachah speaks specifically about not interrupting to speak to a non-Jew, and also reprimands those who spend this time throwing things around (like *berelach*, see below.) Even throughout the year, we may not behave in this flippant manner in shul, and especially on *Tishah B'av*, specifically while lamenting the greatest of all national tragedies! Much rebuke is written in *sefarim* regarding those who do not say the *Kinos* with the right attitude, or worse, G-d forbid, spend the time kibitzing around instead.

The *kinah* of *Eli Tzion*... is traditionally chanted by the *chazzan* and the congregation while standing.

When *Kinos* is completed, we say *Ashrei* and *U'va l'Tziyon*—skipping over the *posukk* of *Va'ani zos brisi*... Full *Kaddish* is said, without *tiskabel*. *Aleinu*, mourner's *Kaddish* (along with allowable *Mishnayos*, as mentioned regarding last night). Then *Kaddish Rabbanan*. It is proper to say *Eichah* again during the day (though it is not read publicly)

### KEEPING KINOS?

"I heard from my father in the name of the *Machatzis Hashekel*, who did have the bound copy of the *Kinos* with *Eichah*," says the *Toras Chaim* (R' Yaakov Shalom Sofer), "He would buy a new *Kinos* every year, and on *Tishah B'av* after reading from it, he would leave it *hefker* in shul. He was concerned that a bound copy that would be shelved from year to year would indicate that he despaired of the *geulah* arriving (before the next *Tishah B'av*)."

The *Ruzhiner*, on the other hand, is of the opinion that we will continue to recite *Kinos* in the future, but the tune will be a happy one and they will be *kinos* (poems) marking joyful events. The *Ba'alei Tosfos*, similarly, connected the book of *Eichah* to

108) "As if sitting in the presence of the body of the newly deceased."

happy compositions: With its mnemonic alphabetical theme, it reflects the style of songs and hymns (and will actually be so, as well, in the future).

### AFTERNOON

You may continue to say *Kinos* after *chatzos* (**1:02 pm**) if you did not complete them before then. Then slip out of shul—with a demeanor of one who Hashem has ostracized—do not stay to socialize, and remember the restriction on greeting others.

After *chatzos* (or upon completing *Kinos*, if doing so after midday), we are permitted to sit on regular-height chairs.

Concerning the encouragement in various *sefarim* to visit the cemetery on *Tishah B'av*, the Rebbe says<sup>109</sup>: Although it is recommended, I have never seen the (Frierdiker) Rebbe practice this. Perhaps this is because we cannot go to the *mikveh* today (and he customarily went to the *mikveh* before going to the *tziyon*). I saw it likewise (in other sources). Now, some say to go, but remain outside—I did not see the Rebbe do this either. This may be because even viewing the *tziyon* from afar creates a connection and the Rebbe did not want even this level of contact without purification in a *mikveh* first.

It is customary to refrain from food preparation until after *chatzos*, though someone who is not saying *Kinos* beforehand anyway should better be involved in preparing the meal for after the fast than getting involved in inane activities and frivolousness. Similarly, as mentioned earlier, we refrain from strolling or browsing in public.

The Rebbe encourages us to utilize this time (of the Nine Days) and especially on *Tishah B'av* to give as many Jews as possible the opportunity to don tefillin (once it is permitted after midday).<sup>110</sup> Take along a *pushka* to encourage the giving of tzedakah and prepare words of Torah appropriate for the time to share with those you meet—deliver them in a personal and loving manner to each individual.<sup>111</sup>

### MINCHAH

*Daven* Minchah later in the afternoon. In 770, Minchah takes place at its regularly scheduled time.

“On fast days in Lubavitch, we’d daven Minchah late.” the Frierdiker Rebbe writes in *Likkutei Dibburim*, “To be precise: ‘late’ does not mean ‘later than the *zman*, once the sun has set,’ but ‘in the later hours of the day’—like: eight o’clock on the seventeenth of Tammuz and seven o’clock on *Tishah B’av*.”<sup>112</sup>

The *paroches* is returned to its rightful place before Minchah. The candles on

109) *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 11, pg. 307

110) *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 9, p 251

111) *Sefer Hasichos* 5748, vol. 2, p. 575

112) Ed. note: *Shkiah* in Lubavitch at this time of year in Lubavitch is after nine o'clock.

the lectern are lit. Men don their *tallis* and *tefillin*, which were not worn in the morning, with a *brachah*. A *bachur* who is not putting on a tallis, should change his *tallis katan* at this time and make a *brachah* as well. The three paragraphs of *Shema* are recited (for the *tefillin*), the last *tefillos* of Shacharis are recited (from *Shir shel Yom* until the end), including whatever learning the individual does daily at the end of *davening*. Only once all the regular post-Shacharis *shiurim* are complete does Minchah begin.

Toward the end of the middle section of the *Amidah*, in the *brachah* of *boneh Yerushalayim*, we say the paragraph of *Nachem*, which ends with the the *brachah* of “*menachem Tziyon u’voneh Yerushalayim*.” Even non-fasters add this paragraph to their *Amidah* (unlike *Aneinu*, see below). If you forgot to say *Nachem*, or mistakenly said the wrong concluding words, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

Then, before concluding the blessing of *Shema Koleinu*, *Aneinu* is recited by all (fasting congregants). If it is mistakenly omitted, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

In his repetition of the *Amidah*, the *chazzan* says *Aneinu* after the *brachah* of *go’el Yisroel*, and *Birchas Kohanim* as usual (unlike Shacharis). The *chazzan* says *Nachem* in *boneh Yerushalayim* in the same place as during the individual *Amidah*.

This is the order for Minchah: *Korbanos*. *Ashrei* followed by half-*Kaddish*. The reading of the Torah (*Vayechal*) and the *Haftarah* (*Dirshu*). *Yehalelu* followed by half-*Kaddish*. *Amidah* with the addition of *Aneinu* and *Nachem*. The repetition by the *chazzan*, with *Aneinu*, *Nachem* and *Birchas Kohanim*. *Kaddish tiskabel*. *Aleinu*, followed by the mourner’s *Kaddish*. Regular *Mishnayos* and *Kaddish Derabanan*.

It is customary to give an abundance of *tzedakah* on public fast days. Calculate the cost of the food that you would have eaten were it not a fast day—and to give that amount to the poor during the evening of the fast.<sup>113</sup>

Those who wear additional pairs of *tefillin* daily (*Rabbeinu Tam*, popularly, or *Ra’avad* and *Shimusha Rabba*), should don them on *Tishah B’av* as well after Minchah. Say the three paragraphs of *Shema*, *Kadesh* and *V’haya ki yivi’acha*, as usual.

## LEARNING

**Daily Shiurim:** The Rebbe instructs<sup>114</sup> not to push off *Chitas* until nighttime, despite other restrictions on learning. Regarding *Rambam*, as it states explicitly in

113) Do not use *maaser* money for this purpose.

114) *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 13, pg. 331. Arguably, **Tehillim** can be said as a type of *tefillah*, for **Tanya** we extrapolate from the leniency for (regular) mourners, **Chumash**—there is a specific dispensation for reviewing the weekly *parshah*.

the published schedule (*moreh shiur*): learn it after the fast is over.

Should we learn *Hilchos Beis Habechirah* today as well, (the postponed fast of) the tenth of Av? “It requires (halachic) investigation,” the Rebbe says,<sup>115</sup> “Whether it is only the fast that is pushed off from Shabbos or is the whole period of *Bein Hametzarim* extended to the tenth of Av as well. Therefore, we must learn the halachos of the *Beis Hamikdash* also on the tenth of Av (though in a way that is permitted, after *chatzos* or even making up a *shiur* after the fast is over.)”

There is a well-published practice to say *pessukim* of comfort from the *nevi'im* this late afternoon. In *sefarim* it is written: “Do not forgo this custom, so that it will be established in the hearts of the populace that Hashem will indeed redeem us in His Mercy when all these words of comfort from our prophets will be speedily fulfilled.”

### BE HAPPY, NO JOKES!

“The Tzemach Tzedek called the Ruzhiner, ‘the Holy Ruzhiner,’” it says in *Sefer Haminhagim*.<sup>116</sup> “And he told this story about him: The Holy Ruzhiner would urge to stay far away from depressive, and even bitter thoughts, and his Chassidim would play practical jokes. On *Tishah B'av*, they would throw *berelach* (thistles). Then someone came up with the idea to open the rooftop of the *beis midrash*, and lower a noose. When someone would enter, the Chassidim on the roof would throw the noose on him and draw him up. So they did.... Then the Ruzhiner entered, straight into the trap. Those on the roof did not see who it was, so they raised the rope. When they recognized the Rebbe, they quickly lowered him back into the shul. The Ruzhiner said: ‘Look, *Ribbono shel Olam!* If your children cannot respect your holiday, please, just take it away from them!’”

“In Lubavitch, some particular periods during *Tishah B'av* were joyous.” the Rebbe states<sup>117</sup>, then asks: “How can it be proper to be happy? Halachah is very specific that even learning is limited to laws and tracts on mourning—and this concerns subjects in Torah, which is really higher than any limitations of time and space.... But truly, crying and mourning the *Churban* is not the essence of *Tishah B'av*, it is how we translate this message into practice in our service of Hashem that is most important. It is specifically (through joy) that we can build a microcosmic *Beis Hamikdash* (a place for Hashem’s Presence in our hearts), and as it says in *Igeres Hakodesh*, that it is through our personal redemptions that we merit the *geulah* for everyone.”

In *Shaar Hakavanos*: It is customary (to break somewhat from our deep mourning and) say *pessukim* from the words of comfort of the *nevi'im* and also go back to sitting on benches in the afternoon of *Tishah B'av*. This seems counterintuitive: it is specifically at that time, after *Minchah* on the ninth day of Av, that “a fire broke out in the Heichal....” Shouldn’t we be **more** stringent with mourning practices at that time? But we can understand this reversal from the story in the Gemara,

115) *Sefer Hasichos* 5751, vol. 2, p. 691. See fn. 87 there.

116) *Laws of Bein Hametzarim*

117) *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash*, 5725

based on Tehillim<sup>118</sup>, that at the time of the storming of the *Heichal* and the murder rampage began on the *Yidden* there, it seemed that this was the end of the Jewish nation at the hand of the enemies' sword, *chas v'shalom*. But then, toward evening, the remnant *Yidden* saw how the *Heichal* went up in flames and they began to say this *mizmor*, a song of praise. Great joy broke out among them for the sight was a great comfort: this was the fulfillment of the navi's promise that Hashem would pour his anger (at the sins of the Jews) on "wood beams and stones" instead for "a fire has flared up from *Tziyon*". For this, the *Yidden* celebrated at exactly this time of day. An additional reason (as I heard from my teacher, the Arizal) is that at that moment in time, Moshiach was born, and he is called "Menachem", as is recorded in the Midrash Eichah.

### SUNDAY NIGHT

The fast is over at **8:34 pm**. In order to break your fast, however, you must hear *Havdalah*—details below.

Maariv is recited on time. There is no halachic basis for prolonging the fast, which would constitute discomfort for a great part of the community (those who do not fast well, including expectant and nursing mothers who are waiting for *Havdalah*).

Do not recite *Atah chonantanu*, even if you omitted it on the previous night. Wash your hands three times each without a *brachah*, past the wrists, put on your leather footwear, and rinse your face and mouth before *Havdalah* and *Kiddush Levanah*, as per the conclusion of the Yom Kippur fast.

*Sefer Seder Hayom*: "Go home, accept condolences on your sorrow by believing with perfect faith that our Hashem will comfort us from our mourning (permanently) as He promised through His prophets."

### HAVDALAH & KIDDUSH LEVANAH

Recite *Havdalah* after Maariv, but omit the blessings on spices and the flame. You may drink the wine.<sup>119</sup>

*Kiddush Levana* is recited after *Havdalah*, with a *gartel* and a *siddur*.<sup>120</sup>

From a letter of *motzoei Tishah B'av 5744*: It is a *minhag* to do *Kiddush Levanah* specifically on *motzoei Tishah B'av*. The reasons for this are found in many places—(in order to usurp the negative residue of *Tishah B'av*, we follow with) a practice that bears a positive message: *Yidden* and the *Shechinah*, though currently in *golus* at the nadir of our history, will merit to rise again in the future and wax like the moon. Another connection to *Tishah B'av* is that Moshiach's birthday is at Minchah

118) Chapter 79

119) Some are stringent to give the cup to a child, if possible.

120) To eat or not to eat before *Kiddush Levanah*: In *Sefer Haminhagim*, regarding post-Yom Kippur, it seems clear that breaking the fast should precede *Kiddush Levanah*. So it was done in 770 until 5731. However, more recently, *Kiddush Levanah* was recited first, and that is how it is currently practiced.

time on *Tishah B'av* (and in *Kiddush Levanah*, we proclaim “Dovid, the king of Yisrael, is alive and enduring!”)

If you forgot to recite *Havdalah* before eating, see the chart at the end of the booklet.

A man who has previously recited *Havdalah* may not repeat it for the sake of a woman who has not heard *Havdalah*.<sup>121</sup> If a man plans to return home and recite *Havdalah* for his wife, he should have in mind not to fulfill his obligation with the *Havdalah* that he is presently hearing in shul.

Women who are fasting and find it difficult to wait until their husbands return from shul should recite *Havdalah* for themselves (if not over wine, then over *chamar hamedinah*, like beer, tea or coffee). If they are unable to recite *Havdalah*, they may drink water in the interim (although this is not our custom regarding an ordinary *motzoei Shabbos Havdalah*). If truly necessary, they may drink soda and even tea or plain coffee without sugar or milk. If it is urgent, they may eat and drink before their husbands return to recite *Havdalah*.

### BREAK-FAST

If you intend to eat bread or *mezonos* immediately after *Havdalah*, and these items are on the table at which you recite *Havdalah*, you should cover them until you have concluded *Havdalah*.

The blessing you recite over the *Havdalah* wine (*borei pri hagafen*) also covers all other drinks of which you partake immediately afterwards. This is true only if the other drinks were either on the table where you recited *Havdalah* or if you had intended to drink them, even if you didn't consciously include them in the blessing of *borei pri hagafen*. In either case, you can then drink them without reciting a prior or subsequent blessing. However, if the drinks were not present on the table or in your mind, they require their own prior blessing (*Shehakol*), but they do not require a subsequent blessing (*borei nefashos*), because they will be included in the subsequent blessing of *al hagefen*.

If you intend to wash your hands for a meal immediately after reciting *Havdalah* and do not intend to drink additional wine during that meal (as per the custom to refrain from wine on the night following *Tishah B'av*, even for *zimun*), you must recite *al hagefen* before your meal. If you forgot to recite *al hagefen* before starting your meal, you should interrupt your meal to recite it. If you remember only after reciting *Birchas Hamazon*, do not recite *al hagefen*.

On the night following the fast, it is proper to refrain from eating meat or drinking wine (except for *Havdalah* and a *seudas mitzvah*<sup>122</sup>) until the next morning. The additional methods of mourning (such as laundering, haircutting, and listening to music) are suspended starting right after the fast.

<sup>121</sup>) Because of a differentiated level of obligation, as per the halachic sources.

<sup>122</sup>) In this detail, we are less stringent than the Nine Days. Even non-relatives can partake. However, we customarily do not make a *zimun* on wine tonight at a regular meal.

# “Oops! I made a mistake...”

on Rosh Chodesh AV or on Tishah B'av

What did I do?

When did I remember?

Now I should...

forgot יעלה יזבוא יעלה

before saying Hashem's name in ובנה

say יעלה יזבוא now

mentioned a Yom Tov instead

after saying Hashem's name in ובנה

conclude the brachah & then say the brachah of שנתן ראשי חדשים<sup>1</sup>

**After shki'ah:**  
conclude the brachah; I don't say שנתן ראשי חדשים<sup>2</sup>

after saying Hashem's brachah of הטוב והמטיב

interrupt & go back to רחם

not repeat *bentching*<sup>12</sup>

said ותחזינה עינינו after יעלה יזבוא (as in davening)

before saying Hashem's name in ובנה

conclude the brachah & then say the brachah of שנתן ראשי חדשים<sup>1</sup>

**After shki'ah:**  
conclude the brachah; I don't say שנתן ראשי חדשים<sup>2</sup>

after saying Hashem's brachah of הטוב והמטיב

not repeat *bentching*<sup>2</sup>

before saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah

start ובנה ירושלים now & continue as usual

after saying Hashem's name at the end of the brachah

say: למדני חקיו; then start ובנה ירושלים<sup>3</sup>

after concluding המוזיק שפיתנו לעיון

return to רחם

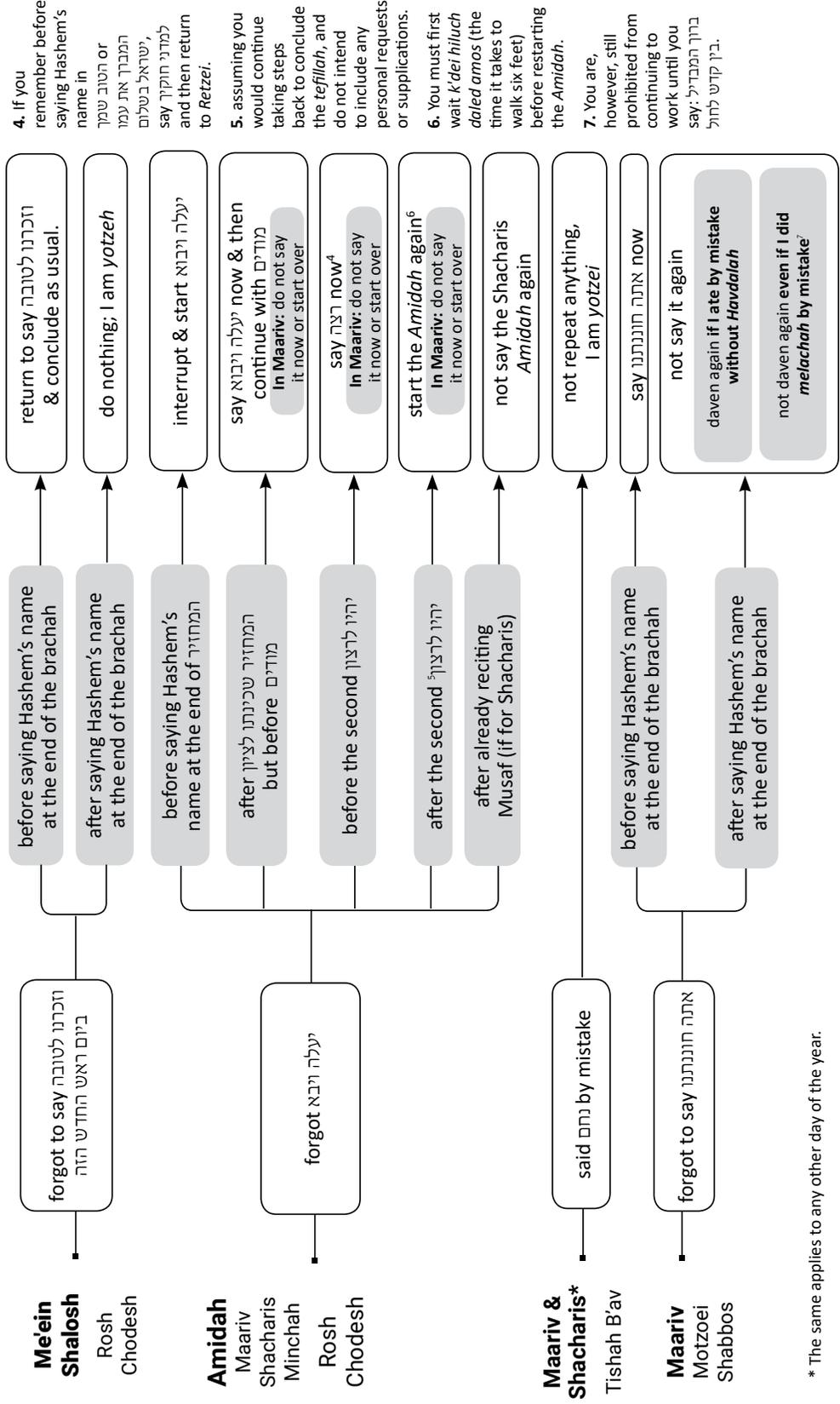
**Birchas Hamazon**

Rosh Chodesh

1. as stated in the siddur (for Rosh Chodesh):  
ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר נתן ראשי חדשים לעמו ישראל לזכרון (without the conclusion).

2. If you did not realize that you are not meant to repeat *bentching* and you started saying it again, stop wherever you are currently holding—even in middle of a brachah.

3. If you concluded the brachah with *ברוך ברוך*, you are *yotzei*.

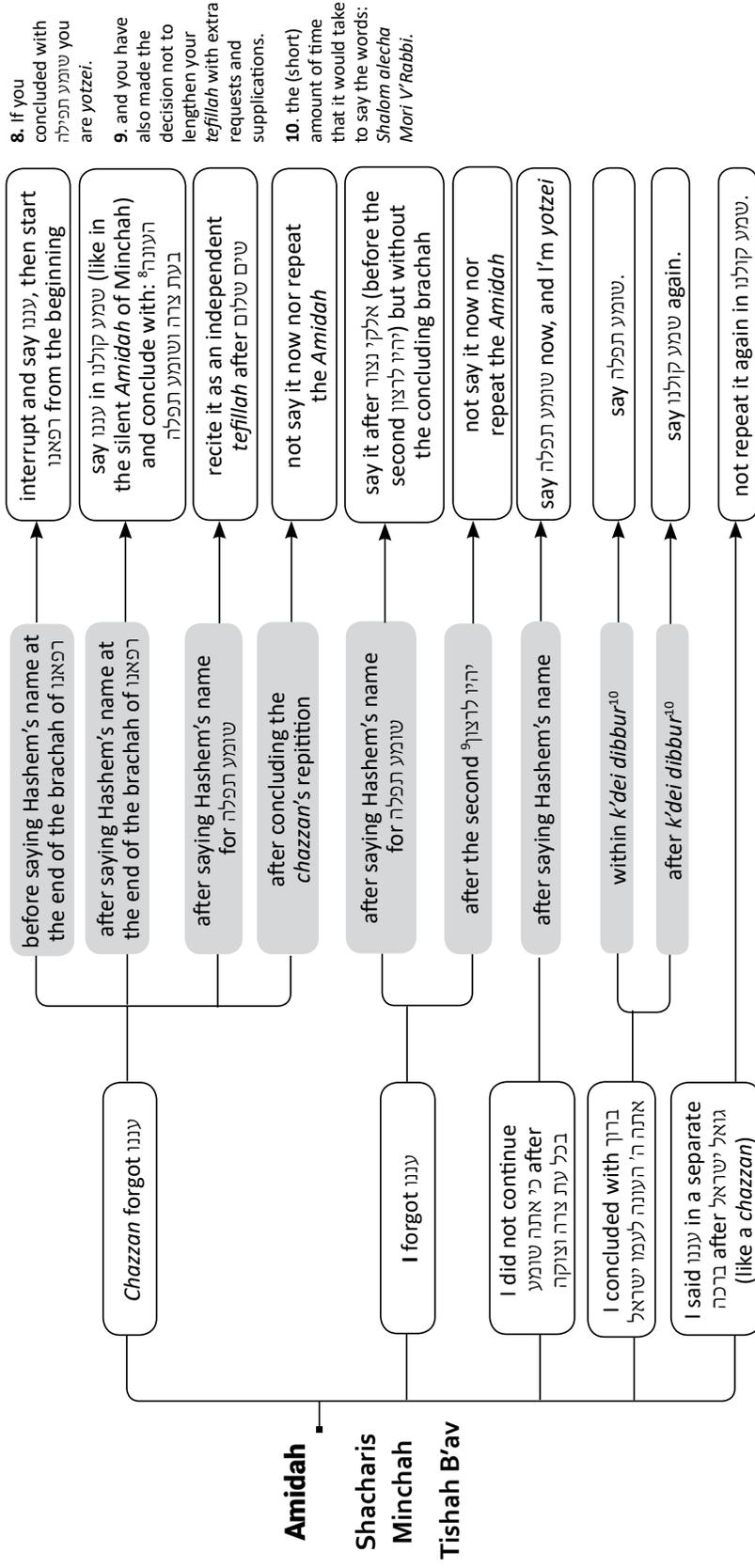


\* The same applies to any other day of the year.

## What did I do?

## When did I remember?

## Now I should...

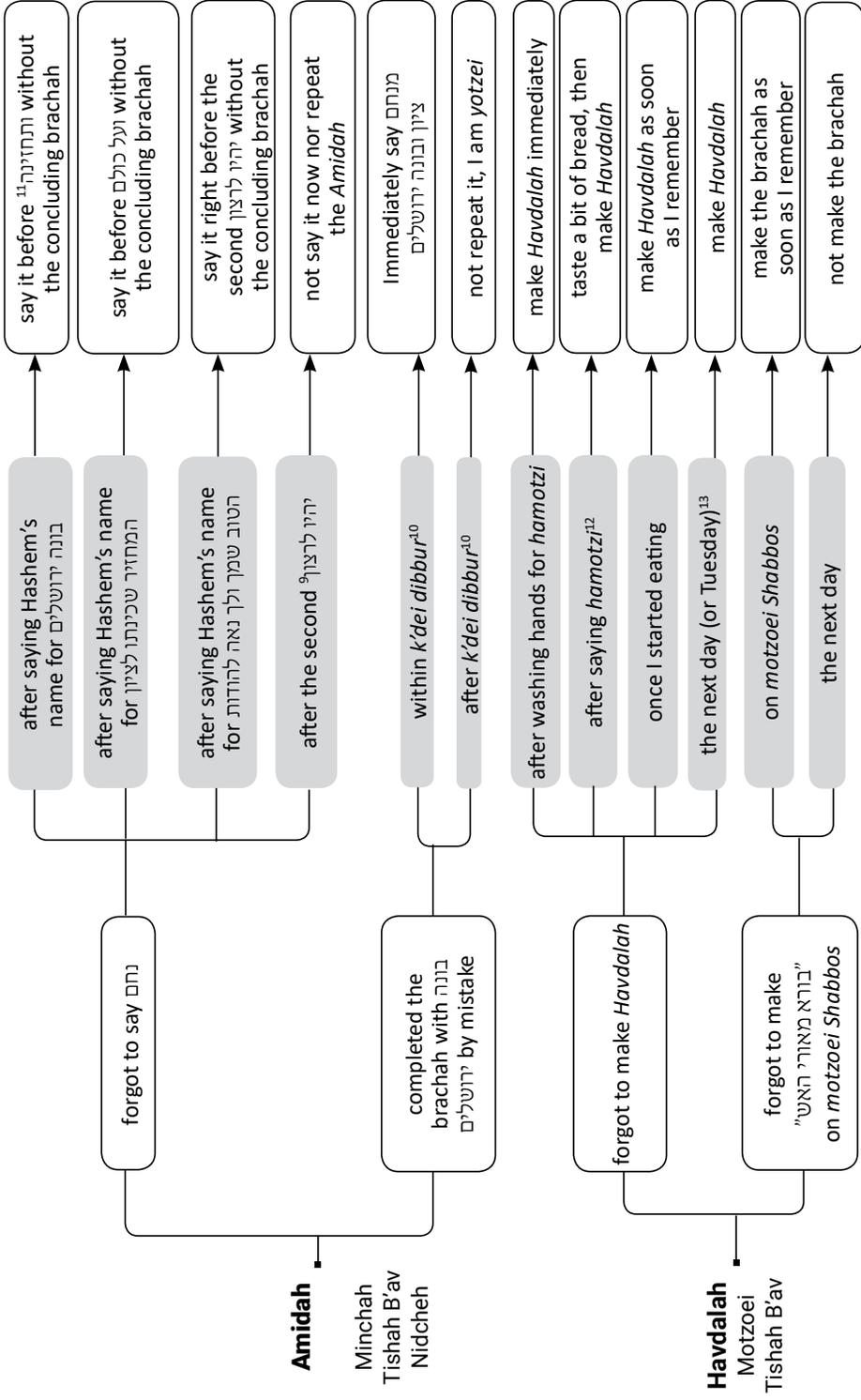


8. If you concluded with שמוע תפלה you are *yotzei*.

9. and you have also made the decision not to lengthen your *tefillah* with extra requests and supplications.

10. the (short) amount of time that it would take to say the words: *Shalom alecha Mori V'Rabbi*.

11. If you said it before **את צבוח דוד** as a brachah on its own, you are *yotzei* (and it is not considered an interruption).
12. or *mezonos* on cake.
13. after Tuesday *Havdalah* cannot be recited.



**Amidah**

Minchah  
Tishah B'av  
Nidcheh

**Havdalah**

Motzoei  
Tishah B'av