



בס"ד Laws & Customs: Tishah B'Av

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SHABBOS CHAZON (8 Av)

On Friday, one bathes as usual in honour of *Shabbos*, goes to Mikvah, trims nails, and uses *Shabbos* clothing and tablecloths that were freshly laundered before the Nine Days. [However, one should not change the linens.]

If necessary, one may taste the *Fleishig* food when preparing it for *Shabbos*, provided it is expelled without swallowing. Apart from that, one may not partake of any *Fleishig Shabbos* foods on *Erev Shabbos*, even if ordinarily accustomed to doing so.

If there won't be enough time after *Shabbos*, one should bring *Tishah B'Av* shoes and *Kinos* to *Shule* before *Shabbos*.

Shabbos clothing is worn as usual, and care is taken not to display any signs of mourning on *Shabbos*. In fact, one should be even more joyous than usual.

One may – and should – eat meat and drink wine on *Shabbos Chazon*.

One may not stroll for pleasure the entire *Shabbos*.

It is a *Mitzvah* to publicize in the name of R' Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev that this *Shabbos* is called "*Chazon*" (vision) because the *Neshomo* is shown a vision of the *Beis Hamikdash*. The purpose of this vision is to arouse a yearning to actually see the *Beis Hamikdash*, and to do all that is necessary to attain this goal.

A *Siyum* is made as per the rest of the Nine Days. If held after midday, the *Siyum* should be on a *Masechta* with a concluding topic that may be learned on *Tishah B'Av* (such as *Moied Kotton*).

In *Krias Hatorah*, the first *Aliyah* concludes at the end of *Possuk* 11, and the second *Aliyah* begins with the word *Eicha*.

A *Bris* (including the *Seudah*) should be conducted before *Mincha*.

SHABBOS AFTER MIDDAY

Starting from midday (12:26pm), one learns only those parts of *Torah* which may be studied on *Tishah B'Av* (see section "Learning on *Tishah B'Av*"). *Chitas*, *Rambam* and *Shnayim Mikrah* should be completed before midday. [If running late, these may be finished any time before sunset.] Of course, one may learn the *Sichos* and *Maamarim* from years when the 8th or 9th of Av coincided with *Shabbos* (i.e. 5724, 5725, 5731, 5734, 5741, 5748, 5751).

A public *Kiddush* or *Farbrengen* may be conducted as usual. However, words of

Torah should focus on topics that may be studied or discussed on *Tishah B'Av*.

Mincha is davened early enough to allow sufficient time for the *Seudah Hamafsek*. *Krias Hatorah* should not begin prior to *Mincha Gedolah* (12:53pm). *Shmoneh Esrei* must certainly not begin before then.

Tzidkosecha is not recited.

A *Chiyuv* recites the usual *Mishnayos* before the final *Kaddish*.

In practice, the third chapter of *Pirkei Avos* is **not** recited after *Mincha*.

SEUDAH HAMAFSEKES

After *Mincha*, the *Seudah Hamafsek* is eaten. There are no restrictions as to what may be eaten. In fact, it is prohibited to minimize the meal, as that could be seen as an expression of sorrow on *Shabbos*. For the same reason, eggs and ashes are not eaten.

One may eat this meal together with the entire family as usual, even if this results in a *Mezuman* of three adult men. However, one should not invite guests unless they normally come over at this time every *Shabbos*, or they have nowhere to eat.

During the *Seudah*, one sits on a chair of regular height and wears leather shoes.

One should eat and drink adequately in preparation for the fast. Nevertheless, one should not state this intention explicitly, so as not to convey that one is preparing on *Shabbos* for the weekday.

Shir Hamaalos is recited before *Bentching*, and a *Mezuman* is made if three adult men ate the *Seudah Hamafsek* together.

One may eat and drink after *bentching*, until sunset (5:33pm). As it is *Shabbos*, there is no need to stipulate before *bentching* that one intends to continue eating afterward.

One must stop eating and drinking before sunset. Similarly, all other *Tishah B'Av* restrictions begin at sunset – except that one continues to wear leather shoes and to sit on a regular-height chair until *Shabbos* concludes.

One may not prepare or carry *Tishah B'Av* shoes and *Kinos* whilst it is still *Shabbos*, even if there is an *Eruv*.

TISHAH B'AV EVENING

Shabbos concludes at 6:15pm. No *Tishah B'Av* preparations should be made before

reciting *Boruch Hamavdil Bein Koidesh Lechol*.

The prevalent custom is to delay *Maariv* so that everyone has sufficient time to make their way from home to *Shule* after *Shabbos* has ended. Accordingly, when *Shabbos* ends, one first recites *Boruch Hamavdil Bein Koidesh Lechol*, then changes from leather to non-leather footwear before heading to *Shule*.

[If one came to *Shule* while it was still *Shabbos*, he does not change his footwear as soon as *Shabbos* ends. Rather, he does so right after *Borchu* at the beginning of *Maariv* – or before *Borchu* if he is the *Chazzan*.]

When changing footwear, one should avoid touching them directly. If he did, he must wash his hands up to the knuckles before davening.

One continues wearing *Shabbos* clothing on *Motzei Shabbos*.

The *Paroches* is removed from the *Aron HaKodesh* (or drawn aside) before *Maariv*, but only after *Shabbos* ends.

The lights in *Shule* are dimmed to a bare minimum.

Atah Chonantanu is recited in *Shmoneh Esrei*.

After *Shmoneh Esrei*, the *Chazzan* recites *Kaddish Tiskabel*.

Havdallah is not recited until after the fast on Sunday evening. However, between *Kaddish* and the reading of *Eicha*, a *Havdallah* candle is held aloft in *Shule* so that all may recite the *Brocho* of *Borei M'orei Ho'eish*. [One must come close enough to actually benefit from the light before a *Brocho* can be made.] If one did not do this in *Shule* before *Eicha*, he should do so at any point during the evening, before dawn. One may also recite this *Brocho* before davening *Maariv* if he wishes.

The prevalent custom is that children under *Bar/Bas Mitzvah* do not make *Havdallah* before eating. Rather, they hear *Havdallah* from an adult at the conclusion of the fast.

A man or woman who is exempt from fasting must recite *Havdallah* before eating, but without *Besomim*. The wine should be given to a child who understands the concept of *Brochos* (the younger, the better). If no such child is present, the person making *Havdallah* may drink it.

Eicha is recited together with the *Chazzan*. One should recite it while seated on a low chair, as opposed to standing. The *Chazzan*

recites *Eicha* unhurriedly, pausing between each *Posuk* and raising his voice slightly at the beginning of each *Perek*.

The final *Possuk* (i.e. the second “*Hashivenu*”) is recited aloud with the *Chazzan*, followed by a few short *Kinos*.

One who *davens* without a *Minyan* still recites *Eicha* and *Kinos*.

Vihi Noam is omitted, but *V’atah Kaddosh* is recited. This is followed by the full *Kaddish* – excluding the line beginning *Tiskabel* – and then *Aleinu*.

A *Chiyuv* recites the third *Perek* of *Mishnayos Moied Kotton* before the final *Kaddish*.

One does not exchange the usual greeting of a *Gutte Voch*.

V’Yiten Lecha is not recited.

Unless inconvenient, it is preferable to delay washing leftover dishes and utensils from *Shabbos* until after midday on Sunday.

It is not our custom to sleep on the floor, nor to place a stone under the pillow.

🕊️ LEARNING ON TISHAH B’AV

Five tragedies occurred on this day:

- The decree for the sin of the *Meraglim*.
- The 1st *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed.
- The 2nd *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed.
- The fall of *Beitar*.
- The site of the *Beis Hamikdash* and the surrounding area was ploughed.

On *Tishah B’Av*, one may only learn parts of *Torah* that deal with laws of mourning, the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, or tragedies that befell our nation throughout history. One should learn these in a cursory manner without delving into them analytically (*Drush v’Pilpul*). Similarly, one should not consult a *Rav* about non-urgent *Halachic* matters unrelated to *Tishah B’Av*.

The Rebbe Rashab would learn the *Sugya* of the *Churban* in *Masechta Gittin* (55b-58a), as well as *Midrash Eicha Rabba*. [Some other appropriate texts: The books of *Eicha* and *Iyov*, the dire prophecies of *Yirmiyahu*, the third *Perek* of *Moied Kotton*, the end of *Masechta Taanis* in *Yerushalmi*, the *Tzemach Tzedek’s Reshimos* on *Eicha*, and a review of the *Halachos* of the day.]

One should endeavour to participate in a *Siyum*, as per the rest of the Nine Days. The *Siyum* should be on a *Masechta* with a concluding topic that may be learned on *Tishah B’Av* (such as *Moied Kotton*).

Needless to say, the obligation to learn *Torah* at every available moment still applies fully on *Tishah B’Av*. [Many *Achronim* have lamented the lax attitude some people sadly adopt towards learning on *Tishah B’Av*.]

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

🕊️ LAWS OF TISHAH B’AV

On *Tishah B’Av*, it is prohibited to:

- Wear festive clothing or festive jewellery. [Nevertheless, *Shabbos* clothing is worn on the night of *Tishah B’Av*, as it is *Motzei Shabbos*.]
- Wear footwear containing any leather. One may wear non-leather footwear, including crocs. [If absolutely necessary for work purposes, a *Rav* should be consulted.]
- Go to *Mikvah*, bathe or wash any part of the body – even in cold water. One may not even wipe himself with a cloth that is damp enough to moisten what it touches. [One may rinse if necessary for medical or therapeutic purposes, or for pain relief. One may also rinse any soiled areas, but only as necessary. Similarly, one may wash his hands up to the knuckles after exiting the restroom or after touching an area of the body that is normally covered. One may also rinse his hands in the usual manner before and during food preparation. All the above may be done with soap if needed. One may also wash dishes, though it is best to do so while wearing gloves.]
- Apply makeup, ointment, lotions, perfumes or creams – unless necessary for medical or therapeutic purposes, or for pain-relief.
- Brush one’s teeth or rinse one’s mouth.
- Sit on a regular-height chair until *Tishah B’Av* midday (12:26pm) – unless one is frail or infirm, pregnant, while nursing, or when sitting in a vehicle.
- Intimacy – *Harchakos* must be kept even during the day.
- Greet another. If one was greeted, he may return the greeting in a subdued manner, or explain that it is *Tishah B’Av*.
- Give gifts (unless it is *Tzedakah*).
- Study, go to work, engage in business activity, or perform any job or task that requires focus and will thus distract from mourning. [Technically, these are permitted after midday, but it is best to refrain even then.] Nevertheless, one may do so to prevent a financial loss or to retain his job. Even then, any publicly performed work should be deferred until after midday, if at all possible.
- Instruct a non-Jew to work publicly on his behalf (such as construction). However, one may instruct a non-Jew to do any other work, even if it will be performed in one’s own home.

One should not be idle, go on trips, read novels or articles, or engage in any leisurely or entertaining pastimes and activities.

One should not smoke. [At the very least, it should be done privately and kept to an absolute minimum. Of course, smoking is discouraged in general.]

One should be especially careful to avoid anger.

🕊️ WHO MUST FAST?

The ill, elderly, mothers who gave birth within the past month, or pregnant and nursing women who feel or anticipate excessive difficulty, should consult a *Rav*.

A *Rav* should be consulted regarding medicines.

One who mistakenly ate during the fast must immediately resume fasting.

One may not taste food to determine whether it requires salt/spices, even for a *Seudas Mitzvah* right after the fast.

Children under *Bar/Bas Mitzvah* need not fast. From age nine, the custom is to train children to fast at night, and for several hours during the day, as per the child’s ability. [One should not be unduly strict in this regard.]

As explained earlier, an individual exempt from fasting must make *Havdallah* (without *Besomim*) before eating, whether breaking the fast at night or during the day. [A *Havdallah* candle is used only at night.] He should eat in private only, and avoid meat, delicacies or excessive intake. Similarly, children old enough to understand the concept of a fast should avoid meat, delicacies or treats. [Bread is best avoided, so as to sidestep a number of disputes regarding how to wash and *Bentch*.]

🕊️ TISHAH B’AV MORNING

Neggel Vasser is washed only up to the knuckles. [Tip: Prepare the *Neggel Vasser* in a slightly different way as a reminder not to wash one’s hands in the usual manner.]

One wipes his eyes with the towel moistened by his hands. One who rinses out the flakes of his eyes every morning may do so on *Tishah B’Av* too.

After getting dressed, *Neggel Vasser* is performed again – with a *Brocho* – only up to the knuckles.

The *Brocho* of *Sheoso Li Kol Tzorki* is omitted until the following morning.

Tallis and *Tefillin* are not worn until after midday. Likewise, a *Brocho* is not recited on the *Tallis Kotton*. The *Tzitzis* are not held or kissed at *Boruch Sheomar* and *Shema*.

The *Chazzan* lights candles as usual; five for a *Chiyuv*, and two for a non-*Chiyuv*.

During *Shacharis*, only the *Chazzan* recites *Aneinu*. A non-fasting individual shouldn’t serve as *Chazzan*. [See [17 Tammuz Halacha Guide](#) regarding a *Chazzan* who forgot to recite *Aneinu*, or who is not fasting.]

The *Chazzan* does not recite *Birchas Kohanim*.

Tachanun, *Selichos* and *Avinu Malkeinu* are not recited.

An individual who won't be fasting must still hear *Krias Hatorah*, but is not called up for an *Aliyah*. [If he is the only *Kohen* or *Levi*, he should absent himself.] However, if he is called up at *Shacharis*, he may accept the *Aliyah*. He should not serve as the *Ba'al Koreh* unless no one else can. In any case, he may perform *Hagbah* or *Gelilah*.

Kaddish is recited between the last *Aliyah* and *Haftorah*. During *Gelilah* and *Haftorah*, the *Magbiha* holds the *Sefer Torah* while sitting on a regular-height chair. The *Sefer Torah* is returned to the *Aron HaKodesh* right after the *Haftorah*.

Afterwards, *Kinos* is recited. One should recite it while seated on a low chair, as opposed to standing.

One should refrain from casual conversation or other unnecessary interruptions during the recital of *Kinos*.

After *Kinos*, the following are recited: *Ashrei*, *Uva L'tziyon* (omitting the *Possuk* beginning *Va'ani Zos Brisi*), and *Aleinu*. Everything else (including *Tehillim*) is postponed until *Mincha* time.

After *Uva L'tziyon*, the *Chazzan* omits the line beginning *Tiskabel* from *Kaddish*.

A *Chiyuv* recites the third *Perek* of *Mishnayos Moied Kotton* before the final *Kaddish*.

One should recite the book of *Eicha* after completing *Kinos* and *davening*.

Where possible, one should time his morning with the aim of concluding *Kinos* (and *Eicha*) shortly before midday, as opposed to long beforehand.

A *Bris* should be postponed until after *Kinos*. The baby's parents and *Baalei Habris* may wear *Shabbos* clothing for the duration of the *Bris*, but not leather shoes. The *Sandek* sits on a regular-height chair while the *Bris* is performed. The *Brocho* is recited on wine, but is drunk by a child who understands the concept of *Brochos* (the younger, the better). The *Seudah* takes place at night, after the fast, and all attending the *Seudah* may partake of meat and wine.

It is not our custom to specifically visit a cemetery on *Tishah B'Av*.

TISHAH B'AV AFTERNOON

In the afternoon, the intensity of mourning lessens and some restrictions are relaxed.

It is customary to wait until midday before preparing for the post-fast meal. However, one may begin preparations for a *Seudas Mitzvah* before midday.

After midday, it is permitted to sit on regular-height chairs, unless one will still be finishing *Kinos*.

Chitas is learned after midday, but *Rambam* is postponed until evening.

MINCHA

After midday, and before *Mincha*, the *Paroches* is restored to its usual place on the *Aron HaKodesh*.

Mincha is longer than usual (due to *Krias Hatorah* and *Haftorah*) and should be timed to conclude before sunset (5:34pm).

Before *Mincha*, one puts on *Tallis* and *Tefillin* and recites the entire *Shema*, followed by the selections omitted from the conclusion of *Shacharis* (i.e. *Shir Shel Yom*, *Ein Kelokeinu*, *Tehillim*). These should be recited with a *Minyan*, and *Kaddish* is said at the appropriate places.

Krias Hatorah should not begin before *Mincha Gedolah* (12:53pm). *Shmoneh Esrei* must certainly not begin before then.

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

An individual who won't be fasting must still hear *Krias Hatorah* of *Vayechal*, but is not called up for an *Aliyah*. [If he is the only *Kohen* or *Levi*, he should absent himself.] If he is called up, and declining the *Aliyah* will pain him or minimize the honour of the *Torah*, he may accept the *Aliyah*. He should not serve as the *Ba'al Koreh*, unless no one else can. In any case, he may perform *Hagbah* or *Gelilah*.

When the congregation recites the verses aloud, the *Ba'al Koreh* waits for silence before resuming. The *Oileh* begins these verses with the congregation but concludes with the *Ba'al Koreh*.

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

One who forgot *Nacheim* may recite it in *Sh'ma Koleinu* after *Aneinu*; in *Retzei* before *V'sechezena*; or in *Modim* before *V'al Kulam*. [In any of these cases, he recites the conclusion of the respective *Brocho* as usual, and does not add the words *Menachem Tziyon Uvoneh Yerushalayim*.] If one didn't remember until he concluded *Shmoneh Esrei*, he does not repeat it.

One who forgot *Aneinu* in *Sh'ma Koleinu* may recite it in the passage of *Elokai N'tzor*, before the second *Yih'yu L'ratzon*. If he didn't remember until he ended *Shmoneh Esrei*, he does not repeat it.

A non-fasting individual omits *Aneinu* but still recites *Nacheim*.

The *Chazzan* recites *Aneinu* between *Goel Yisroel* and *R'foeinu*, *Nacheim* in *Boinei Yerushalayim*, and *Birchas Kohanim* towards the end of *Shmoneh Esrei*. [A non-fasting individual shouldn't serve as *Chazzan*. See 17 *Tammuz Halacha Guide* regarding a *Chazzan* who forgot to recite *Aneinu*, or who is not fasting.]

Tachanun and *Avinu Malkeinu* are not said.

A *Chiyuv* recites the standard *Mishnayos* prior to the last *Kaddish*.

After *Mincha*, one puts on *Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin* and recites the usual selections.

One should make sure to put on *Tefillin* before sunset (5:34pm). If one *davens* with a *Minyan* that will conclude only after sunset, he should change into *Rabbeinu Tam Tefillin* before *Mincha*.

CONCLUSION OF FAST

The fast concludes at 6:03pm.

One washes *Netilas Yadayim* (covering both hands entirely with water) without a *Brocho*, and rinses one's mouth as soon as possible after *Maariv*, and certainly before *Kiddush Levanah* or (*Havdallah* and) breaking the fast.

Havdallah is recited without *Besomim* and a *Havdallah* candle. The one who recites *Havdallah* drinks the wine. [If one forgot to recite *Havdallah*, he should do so as soon as he remembers – up until sunset on Tuesday afternoon. Even though he ate prior to *Havdallah*, there is no need to repeat *Shmoneh Esrei* again with *Atah Chonantanu*.]

A man who heard *Havdallah* should not recite it again for a woman. Therefore, when there are women at home waiting to hear *Havdallah*, one should not be *yoitze* with the *Havdallah* at *Shule*.

A woman may make *Havdallah* herself.

Kiddush Levanah is recited if the moon is visible. Ideally, one should first change into leather shoes, rinse one's face to freshen up, and taste something (after *Havdallah*) – unless this will negate his participation in a *Minyan*.

The *Beis Hamikdash* was set ablaze on the afternoon of the 9th of Av, and burned through the 10th. Therefore, the custom is to extend all restrictions of the [Nine Days](#) (e.g. refraining from meat or wine, haircuts, bathing, doing laundry, wearing freshly laundered clothing) until midday (12:26pm) of the 10th of Av.

15TH AV / SHABBOS NACHAMU

One should continue to participate in a *Siyum* and learn *Hilchos Beis Habechira* every day until (and including) the 15th of Av (*Shabbos Nachamu*). The 15th of Av is also an appropriate time for a joyous *Farbrengen* and *Hachlatos* to increase *Torah* study.

While the *Aseres Hadibros* is read, the congregation stands facing the *Sefer Torah*.

Av Harachamim and *Tzidkosecha* are not recited on *Shabbos Nachamu*, in honour of the 15th of Av.

The third chapter of *Pirkei Avos* is recited after *Mincha*.