



Laws & Customs: Tzom Gedalya

For the year 5787

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According to Minhag Chabad

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🕊️ WHO MUST FAST?

All must fast, including a *Chosson* and *Kallah*, and *Baalei Habris* (i.e. the *Mohel*, the *Sandek*, and the father of the baby).

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

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

Children below *Bar/Bas Mitzvah* need not fast. From age nine, the common custom is to train children to fast for several hours, according to each child's ability. [One should not be unduly strict in this regard.]

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

🕊️ EATING PRIOR TO THE FAST

One may eat and drink all night until dawn (5:05am), provided that either of these conditions is met:

- One didn't go to sleep for the night. [Dozing off is not regarded as such.]
- One stipulated (preferably verbally) before going to sleep that he would eat upon awakening. One should wash *Neggel Vasser* (and say morning *Brochos* if rising for the day) before eating.

🕊️ LAWS OF FASTING

One should not brush one's teeth or rinse one's mouth. [If this will cause great aggravation, there is room to be lenient, provided that one leans forward to prevent any liquid from flowing down one's throat; that one uses inedible substances (e.g. Listerine); and that one rinses with less than 86 ml.]

When medically necessary, one may take non-chewable pills without water. A *Rav* should be consulted about other medicines.

One may shower, bathe, apply ointments or creams, and cut nails or hair.

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

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

- One expels it without swallowing.
- One tastes only an absolute minimum.
- One does not taste more than 86 ml in total throughout the day.

🕊️ CONDUCT ON A FAST DAY

One should learn *Torah* related to the theme of the fast.

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

The purpose of fasting is to make a *Cheshbon Hanefesh* (soul reckoning) and do *Teshuvah*. Idling away one's time, or engaging in joyful or entertaining activities, is not in the spirit of the fast. One should be especially careful to avoid anger.

🕊️ CHAZZAN'S RECITATION OF ANEINU

During *Shacharis*, only the *Chazzan* recites *Aneinu*. Therefore, one who won't be fasting should not serve as *Chazzan*.

[In the unlikely event that the *Chazzan* won't be fasting, or fewer than three congregants will be fasting: Instead of reciting *Aneinu* between *Goel Yisroel* and *R'foeinu*, the *Chazzan* includes *Aneinu* in the *Brocho* of *Shema Koleinu*, and concludes the *Brocho* as usual, with *Shomea Tefillah*.]

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

- if he remembered before reciting *Hashem's* name at the end of *R'foeinu*, he recites *Aneinu* immediately and then repeats the *Brocho* of *R'foeinu*;
- if he already concluded the *Brocho* of *R'foeinu*, he recites *Aneinu* in the *Brocho* of *Shema Koleinu*, ending the *Brocho* with a double conclusion: *Ha'one B'eis Tzara V'shomea Tefillah*;
- if he already concluded the *Brocho* of *Shema Koleinu*, he recites *Aneinu* as a separate *Brocho* immediately after the *Brocho* of *Sim Shalom*;
- if he remembered only after ending *Chazaras Hashatz*, he does not repeat it.

🕊️ SELICHOS & AVINU MALKEINU

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

Selichos is recited not before *davening*, but during *davening*, right before *Shomer Yisroel* at the end of the long Monday *Tachnun*. Certain selections are omitted, as those are said only when *Selichos* is recited prior to *davening*. [The newer edition of *Tehilas Hashem* printed by Kehos in Israel contains the *Selichos* for *Tzom Gedalya* exactly as it is recited during *davening*.]

It is customary to stand for the entire *Selichos*. [An infirm person may sit. If possible, he should at least stand for each recitation of the *Yud Gimel Midos*.]

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

The long *Avinu Malkeinu* is recited with the selections for *Aseres Y'mei Teshuvah*, and not the selections recited on a fast day. [It is not our custom to recite it verse by verse after the *Chazzan*.]

If *Tachnun* is omitted (e.g. a *Chosson* or *Baalei Habris* are present), *Selichos* is still recited, whereas *Avinu Malkeinu* is omitted.

🕊️ TORAH READING

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

A non-fasting individual must still hear *Krias Hatorah* of *Vayechal*, but is not called up for an *Aliyah*. [If he is the only *Kohen* or *Levi*, he should step out.] If he is called up at *Shacharis*, he may accept the *Aliyah*, since Monday is always a day of *Kriah*. However, at *Mincha*, he should accept the *Aliyah* only if declining it will pain him or diminish the honour of the *Torah*. In any case, he may always perform *Hagbah* or *Gelilah*.

A non-fasting individual should not serve as the *Ba'al Koreh*, unless no one else can.

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 ends with the *Ba'al Koreh*.

🕊️ MINCHA

Mincha is longer than usual (due to *Krias Hatorah* and *Haftorah*) and should be timed to conclude before sunset (6:09pm).

Krias Hatorah should not begin prior to *Mincha Gedolah* (12:46pm). *Shmoneh Esrei* must certainly not begin before then.

After *Haftorah*, the *Chazzan* recites *Kaddish* slowly while the *Sefer Torah* is returned to the *Aron Hakodesh*, as at *Shabbos Mincha*.

One who forgot *Aneinu* may recite it in the passage *Elokai N'tzor*, before the second *Yih'yu L'ratzon*. If he remembered only afterward, he does not repeat *Shmoneh Esrei*. [A non-fasting individual does not recite *Aneinu*.]

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

The Rebbe reinstated the custom of addressing the congregation after *Mincha* to arouse them to *Teshuvah*.

The fast concludes at 6:36pm.