

SAMCHAINU GUIDE TO THE HALACHOS OF TISHA B'AV

A SELECTION OF LAWS & CUSTOMS WITH A FOCUS ON SINGLE MOTHER FAMILIES

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כל המתאבל על ירושלים זוכה ורואה בבנינה

May we be zoche to see the rebuilding of the **בֵּהמ"ק** in our times.

Please note that the Halachos and Minhagim contained in this Guide follow the custom of בני אשכנז.

ערב ט' באב

From after chatzos on Erev Tisha B'av, we refrain from taking any pleasure trip, stroll, tour or the like. Someone who is accustomed to walking for exercise is permitted to do so.

סעודה המפסקת

After eating the pre-fast meal, we eat a final meal called the "סעודה המפסקת." During the סעודה המפסקת, we eat foods normally eaten by an avel, because it a seudah of aveilus for the חורבן of the Beis Hamikdash. Even people who will not be fasting (for medical reasons, etc) should eat the סעודה המפסקת, because although they are exempt from fasting, they are not exempt from mourning the חורבן. Children who are old enough to understand should partake in the Seudah as well. The most prevalent minhag is that the seudah should consist of bread and hard-boiled eggs dipped in ashes.

While eating the סעודה המפסקת, we sit on the ground or on a low stool, no more than 3 tefachim (approx. 9 inches) from the ground. After finishing eating, you may sit on a regular chair as long as you have not yet accepted the fast. It is permitted to wear leather shoes while eating the סעודה המפסקת.

You may continue to eat and drink after the סעודה המפסקת, unless you accepted the fast. Before bentching, it is preferable to say or think that we aren't accepting the fast until sunset. All restrictions of Tisha B'Av begin at sunset.

עינויים בט' באב

It is forbidden to eat or drink. Someone who is elderly, weak or ill should consult with a Rav for guidance on their particular situation. Medications may be taken on Tisha B'Av if needed, without water. Someone who requires medication for their health and cannot take it without water may take it with a drop of water.

It is forbidden to wash the body, including the hands for pleasure. Washing hands for "negel vasser" or after using the bathroom is permitted until the knuckles. A woman who is washing dishes (after chatzos) or washing foods to prepare for after the fast may wash in the regular manner, even if this will inadvertently cause her hands to be completely submersed in water. Someone who is not fasting on Tisha B'av (due to illness, etc) should wash for נטילת ידים in the regular manner (washing the entire hand), since this washing is a מצוה, and not for pleasure.

It is forbidden to apply creams and lotions on Tisha B'av for pleasure. Accordingly, a woman should not wear skin products and makeup. Wearing deodorant is permitted. Applying lip balm to dry, cracked lips is permitted. Wearing sunscreen to prevent sunburn is permitted.

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It is forbidden to wear leather shoes on Tisha B'av. Shoes made of canvas, rubber, or other non-leather materials may be worn. Children who are of the age of chinuch (old enough to understand) should not wear leather shoes.

LAWS OF אבילות ON ט' באב

On Tisha B'av, there is an איסור מלאכה which forbids working and regular household chores until after chatzos. Making beds should be postponed until after chatzos. Cleaning the house should be done after chatzos. Washing dishes (by hand) should only be done after chatzos. Loading and setting a dishwasher are allowed even before chatzos. Buying food to prepare for after the fast is permitted before chatzos, but cooking should be done after chatzos.

We do not sit on a regular chair, couch or other seat until after chatzos on Tisha B'av. Instead, we sit on the floor or on a low stool no higher than 3 tefachim (approx. 9 inches) from the ground. Someone who is elderly or unwell and finds it difficult to sit in this manner may sit on a regular chair. Riding in a car or bus in the regular manner is permitted before chatzos, even though the seat is above 3 tefachim.

Similar to אבילים, we do not greet each other on Tisha B'Av. This includes saying "Hello," "Good morning," and the like. Nodding is permitted. If someone greets you, you may return the greeting in a low voice and serious manner.

Giving gifts on Tisha B'av is forbidden. Giving tzedakah is allowed. Learning Torah (aside from topics of Tisha B'av and Aveilus) is forbidden for men and women alike.

When going to sleep on Tisha B'av, you should diminish the usual comfort of your sleep. For example, someone who typically sleeps with 2 pillows should sleep with one. This applies both to nighttime sleep and to a daytime rest.

תפילות בט' באב

- קינוס is read after מעריב and שחרית, followed by איכה.
- During the Shemoneh Esrei of מנחה, we add "נחם" to the Bracha of "בונה ירושלים" and "עננו" in the Bracha of "שמע" קולינו. Those who daven נוסח אשכנז say "שים שלום" instead of "שלום רב".
- Someone who is not fasting should add נחם in bentching.

Women who have sons at home should be aware of the following halachos. Men and boys wear tzitzis on Tisha B'av, but do not make the bracha until after chatzos. Tefillin are not worn in the morning, but instead are put on before Mincha with a bracha and worn until after mincha.

אבילות ON THE 10TH OF AV

The fires of the Churban continued to burn in the Bais Hamikdash well into the 10th of Av. Therefore, the laws of aveilus which we observed in the Nine Days continue to be in effect until chatzos of the tenth day of Av. This includes refraining from haircuts, bathing, washing clothing, eating meat, drinking wine, and listening to music.

When Tisha B'av falls on Thursday, one may take a haircut, shave, bathe, and wash clothing beginning Friday morning, provided that these activities are undertaken with the sole purpose of preparing for Shabbos. Clothing may only be washed Friday morning if they will be needed for Shabbos. However, if you are putting up a load of laundry for Shabbos, you may add other clothes that are not necessary for Shabbos, as well. In case of need, one may take haircuts, shave, and wash laundry on Thursday night (ie. Someone will be going away for Shabbos).

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WHEN TISHA B'AV FALLS ON SHABBOS

When the 9th of Av falls on Shabbos, the fast and all the relevant הלכות are observed on Sunday, the 10th of Av. Accordingly, some הלכות pertaining to ערב תשעה באב and the day following תשעה באב differ from the usual.

הכנה

It is forbidden to prepare on Shabbos for after Shabbos. Therefore, one may not prepare Kinnos, pillows, stools, or any other item needed for the fast while it is still Shabbos. It is permitted to eat more than usual on Shabbos in order to have energy to fast. Rav Elyashiv points out that one should be careful to avoid verbalizing that the purpose of the eating is for the fast. There are different opinions among the Poskim regarding taking a pill on Shabbos to fast better.

סעודות שבת

Acting with אבילות publicly is forbidden on Shabbos. The Shulchan Aruch writes that when תשעה באב falls on Shabbos, one should eat and drink all the delicacies that one would enjoy on any other Shabbos, including chicken and meat. Even סעודות שלישית, eaten during the part of the day when the סעודות המפסקת would normally occur, could be סעודות שלישית. One may eat meat, drink wine, and sing זמירות like one would on any other Shabbos. It is recommended to begin סעודות שלישית earlier, since it is forbidden to eat or drink after שקיעה. If you bentched before it is שקיעה, you may still eat and drink until the time of שקיעה.

After שקיעה

Once the time of שקיעה arrives, it is אסור to eat, drink, or wash hands. After using the bathroom, one may wash up to the knuckles as on תשעה באב. One may sit on a regular chair and wear leather shoes until צאת הכוכבים. When Shabbos is over, one should say ברוך המבדיל and remove leather shoes. It is also proper to change out of בגדי שבת. All the laws of תשעה באב are in effect at that point.

הבדלה

When Shabbos is followed by תשעה באב, then הבדלה in its entirety is postponed until after תשעה באב. On מוצ"ש, the ברכה of בורא מאורי האש is said in shul before איכה is read. Someone who will not be in shul should wait until after צאת הכוכבים, say בורא מאורי האש בין קודש לחול, and then make the ברכה of בורא מאורי האש.

Someone who is Halachically permitted to eat on תשעה באב (due to illness, etc) must make הבדלה before eating. The beginning פסוקים of "הנה קל ישועתי" are omitted, and only the ברכות are said.

It is preferable to make הבדלה on חמר מדינה instead of using wine or grape juice. If only wine or grape juice are available, it should be drunk by a child who is above the age of Chinuch but does not yet understand the concept of mourning. If no child is available, one may drink the minimum שיעור of wine/grape juice.

Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky holds that a קטן above age of 9 should make הבדלה on חמר מדינה before eating on תשעה באב.

AFTER THE FAST

The הלכות of the Nine Days continue until after חצות on the 10th of Av. A year that תשעה באב is a נדחה (postponed one day due to Shabbos) and is observed on the 10th of Av, some activities that are normally forbidden until midday of the day following תשעה באב are permitted earlier.

Cutting hair, bathing, and doing laundry are permissible immediately following הבדלה.

Eating meat or chicken is not allowed immediately, but is permitted the morning after the fast.

Opinions among the Poskim differ with regard to when one may listen to music in such a year. Some hold that one may listen to music immediately after the fast has ended. Other opinions require one to wait until the next morning.