

# DAY - TO - DAY HALACHIC GUIDE

## Laws and Customs for Bein Hametzarim 5781

Installment IV

Friday, 29th of Tammuz - the 5th of Av 5781

### LAWS OF TISHA B'AV

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#### Learn These Laws

“Now is the time,” The Rebbe says in connection with the Nine Days,\* “to remind everyone that this is a propitious time for Torah learning, and generally speaking, this means studying *Shulchan Aruch* to be knowledgeable in the halachos that apply during these days. I am very surprised that there was no big tumult connected with this. Everyone’s entire enthusiasm, it seems, was expended on talking about the halachos of the Beis Hamikdash, and nobody mentioned that, first and foremost, the timely halachos trump even Hilchos Beis Habechirah! We are referring, plain and simple, to the halachos as presented in *Shulchan Aruch* about the Nine Days, and those of earlier, the halachos of the Three Weeks.”

In 5751, the Rebbe says\*\*: As is customary, I’ll begin with adding the clause, “should Moshiach, *chas v’shalom*, be delayed”, for, obviously “we await” that he should come today, *mamosh!* Whenever we take on new resolutions, connected with our service of Hashem during *golus*, we tack on the disclaimer, “should Moshiach, *chas v’shalom*, be delayed”. But truly, even after Moshiach arrives, this aspect will remain, for it will be a continuation of our learning, observance—and good resolutions—that were adopted in *golus*.

“(There is an important topic of study) in addition to learning the halachos of the Beis Hamikdash during Bein Hameitzarim,” the Rebbe explains, “which include many detailed halachos that apply to the Three Weeks, others that are specific to the Nine Days, so that everyone should know what to do (for as long as Moshiach still does not arrive) in terms of mourning for the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash* and our subsequent sojourn into *golus*. As Chazal tell us, “Anyone who laments (the sorrow and ruination of) Yerushalayim will merit to see the city in its (days of glory and) joy.” But besides all this, we also need to increase, as discussed many times previously, in aspects of Torah that explore the special ***subject of the geulah and building the third Beis Hamikdash***.

“The main point is this: Neutralizing the negative aspects of the *Churban* and *golus* is less about brooding over the terrible descent entailed by our exile, and **primarily** through pondering the **advantages of the geulah**...let us awaken within us the passion, the wanting and the longing, and then lead inexorably, to the asking and demanding for the future Redemption. We will thereby expedite and hasten the *geulah* practically, and not only that, we will have done so in a way that we are revealing the true inner good that hides within the *Churban* and the *golus*—a complete transformation of darkness to light.

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The basic laws and customs presented below are derived from multiple sources. 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*. Please see the footnotes in the Hebrew section for more halachic discussion of the topics mentioned.

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.

Halachos compiled by Rabbi **M. M. Rotenberg**.

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\*) *Sichah* of Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av, 5748, transcribed from audio.

\*\*) From the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Devarim*. See also the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Maasei* 5744 (mentioned also elsewhere in this series): There are those unique laws that apply to our conduct during *Bein Hameitzarim*, but these halachos are already transcribed in *Shulchan Aruch*, a *sefer* that every Jew owns, or can easily acquire. The best conduct is always assumed with regard to a fellow Jew, so it is therefore obvious that everyone learns all the detailed laws in *Shulchan Aruch* for all seasons and *Yomim Tovim* and similarly, and has certainly (already learned) the applicable halachos to *Bein Hameitzarim*.”

### 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 *neshama*).

On the other hand, in terms of the order of the words, we can view “Menachem” as the starting act, and once we’re reached this considerable accomplishment, we top it off with “Av”, the comfort being bolstered yet more, in tune with the *possuk* from Tehillim<sup>1</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>2</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 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 halacha), for which value is related to quality over quantity.”

**In 5707<sup>3</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.

### Like You Mean It!

“Some people,” the Rebbe observes<sup>4</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 dispiriting 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>5</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>6</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”, 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”, when these days will be transformed to be “happiness and joy and Yom Tov” with the true and complete Redemption through the righteous Moshiach.”

### 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

3. *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Mevorchim Menachem-Av*, recorded by the Rebbe in *Igros Kodesh*, vol 2, pg. 213

4. *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* of *Parshas Matos-Maasei* 5742

5. See above, under *farbrengens* on *Shabbos Parshas Pinchas*.

6. *Bamidbar* 10:10

7. *Yirmiyahu* 8:20

8. *Yirmiyahu* 35:10

9. *Zechariah* 8:19

1. 103:13

2. *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*

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>10</sup>)

## FRIDAY, 7 MENACHEM-AV EREV SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVARIM

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>11</sup> and we realize that another year has gone by; another day, and yet an additional day is gone, and still “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*!

## Shabbos Preps

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

10. 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.”

11. Megillah 9:28

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), 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 **8:06** pm (eighteen minutes before sunset). This time is for Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

**Remember** to check your local times for Shabbos (midday, earliest Minchah, sunset and the conclusion of Shabbos) before Shabbos begins.

## SHABBOS PARSHAS DEVARIM, 8 MENACHEM AV

### Shabbos Chazon & Erev Tishah B'Av

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 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 an 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>12</sup>

12. Parshas Devarim 5749: The teaching and parable of Reb Levi Yitzchok 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 Yitzchok 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

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 *neshama* (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 *neshama* that is inside and even the body itself!

#### No Break

"This year, *Tisha B'Av* is on Sunday," the Rebbe explains<sup>13</sup> concerning our experience of *Shabbos Chazon* and a calendar setup like this year's, "So *Shabbos Chazon* is also *erev Tishah B'Av*. What is the advantage of this setup? Every year, we envision the third *Beis Hamikdash* on *Shabbos Chazon* (and even though it is our *mazal* that actually sees it, nevertheless [the effect] is multileveled, so the result is that every person can feel some aspect of the inner meaning of *Tishah B'Av*). But then, there are intervening days between *Shabbos Chazon* and *Tishah B'av* that are something of an impediment. But today, it's different, with no break at all between the two; in fact, they overlap, as is proven from practical halachah: we do not say *Tzidkascha* in *Mincha*, for although it is still *Shabbos* (and within *Shabbos*, at its peak spirituality, the time of *ra'ava dera'avin*<sup>14</sup>), we are already in the *Tishah B'av* mode. So there is no break between the vision of the third *Beis Hamikdash* and *Tisha B'Av*, and we can immediately appreciate, right at the outset of the fast, the inner quality of *Tisha B'av*, which is, as the Navi says,<sup>15</sup> "I will transform their mourning into joy," meaning that the entire *golus* is only a stepping stone to the third *Beis Hamikdash*...

This year has an advantage even compared to other years when *Shabbos Chazon* and *Tisha B'Av* coincide. The complete meshing of *Tisha B'Av* with *Shabbos* may seem superior, since the fast is pushed off, but truly this year is even greater. For when *Tishah B'Av* falls on *Shabbos*, the postponement of the fast is an act of Hashem, while this year, the transformation of *Tishah B'av* can be through our own efforts. Furthermore, on *Tishah B'Av-Shabbos Chazon*, we only read the *Haftorah* in shul after many hours of *Tishah B'av* have already passed) This year, we can effect this transformative change right at the outset, before *Tishah B'av* begins.

#### 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 VTzulu*: "Fast and (then) pray", so *Tishah B'Av* precedes *Parshas Veschanan* ("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 *posuk* earlier than indicated, so that the second *aliyah* should not begin with the word "*Eichah*" (the same opening

explanations reveal the inner goodness that is to be found within words of rebuke.

13. *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Devarim, Shabbos Chazon* 5734.

14. Many *sefarim* contextualize the great spiritual quality of *Shabbos Chazon* as "greater than any other *Shabbos*." This means that the entire *Shabbos*, the level of *ra'ava dera'avin*, a sphere above the highest of spiritual worlds (an aspect of *Kesser*) can be potentially achieved (while on every other *Shabbos* it is unique to the late afternoon).

15. *Yirmiyahu* 33:12

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.

The Rebbe explains<sup>16</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 *posuk*, *עַם כָּבֵד עָוֹן*, "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.

#### Shabbos Afternoon

There are differing opinions regarding Torah study on *Shabbos* that is *erev Tishah B'av*. After *chatzos* (midday) at 1:01 pm (in Crown Heights), it is proper to study only those topics that are permitted on *Tishah B'Av*.<sup>17</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, the Rebbe once issued a letter supporting their recital as usual on this *Shabbos*.

The Rebbe Rashab would regularly recite a *maamar* on *Shabbos* afternoon. One year, when *erev Tishah B'Av* fell on *Shabbos*, he still said a *maamar* after *chatzos*. However, he repeated a *maamar* that he had already recited on another occasion—for seemingly, the audience did not understand it properly the first time...

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 1:39 pm (in Crown Heights).

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>18</sup>

16. *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, 5743

17. See details about what is permitted or not below, in the laws of *Tishah B'Av*.

18. Someone who followed the opinion to recite a chapter this week (*Perek* 3),

## Seudah

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*).<sup>19</sup>

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 pre-mix 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.

Stop eating or drinking **before shki'ah** (sunset) at **8:24 pm** (in Crown Heights). The laws of *Tisha B'Av* that prohibit eating, drinking and washing hands apply from *shki'ah*.<sup>20</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 and *Shabbos* attire until after the conclusion of *Shabbos* (**9:13 pm** in Crown Heights). 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*.

*Shabbos* ends at **9:13 pm** (in Crown Heights).

## MOTZOEI SHABBOS KODESH, 9 AV

**May it be transformed to a day of happiness and joy—  
“True joy will only come on Tishah B'Av”<sup>21</sup>**

Five events of national tragedy occurred on *Tishah B'Av*: 1. The Jewish nation was banned from entering *Eretz Yisroel*, and the forty years of wandering the desert commenced. 2. The

repeats it next *Shabbos* regardless.

19. 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 to have extra meals. (Even though the second *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed) we keep this custom, to remind us that very soon we too will have these days transformed to happiness and joy.

20. As do *harchakos* for married couples.

21. 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*.

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>22</sup>, “*Tzion* will be plowed like a field.”

In numerous sources, starting with the famous *Navi*<sup>23</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.

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 Hameitzarim*, 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>24</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>25</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 gain’<sup>26</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>27</sup>”

## Proscriptions

**Note:** Since this year, erev *Tishah B'Av* is on *Shabbos*, 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**

22. *Michah* 3:12

23. *Zechariah* 8:19

24. *Yishayahu* 66:10

25. *Tehillim* 100:2

26. *Mishlei* 14:23

27. *Sefer Hasichos* 5703, pg. 41

**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 on *motzoei Tishah B'Av*.<sup>28</sup>

## Fasting

**Note:** Review the fasting rules of the seventeenth of Tammuz (in the first 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.

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

If you are exempt from fasting, you must recite *havdalah* before eating or drinking.<sup>29</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*.<sup>30</sup> 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.<sup>31</sup> 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 there is a *brison* on *Tisha B'Av*, the wine is given to the newborn's mother.

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.*"

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

28. Even if Maariv is concluded earlier.

29. There are various opinions as to whether a child needs to do so.

30. If so, 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*.

31. Since some opinions hold that women are not obligated in *havdalah* a boy cannot fulfill his obligation with her recital, so if a woman makes *havdalah* on wine, on her own, a young girl should drink it.

particularly conscionable 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>32</sup> In this era of awareness of the extreme dangers of smoking, it should be avoided year-round.

## Washing Up

Washing the body is forbidden, in cold or hot water.<sup>33</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>34</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>35</sup>) you should wash your fingers until the knuckles. When visiting the bathroom, touch private areas and wash your hands as described.<sup>36</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.

Using ointments for the purpose of removing or absorbing

32. 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!"

33. 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.

34. If it is wet enough to wet something else, you may **not** use it.

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

36. 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 to wash.

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* on Shabbos afternoon until the fast ends.<sup>37</sup>

### Torah Learning

“Hashem’s Orders are just, they gladden the heart,”<sup>38</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.

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 “*Rabbee Yishmael Omer*”. The Torah reader may review the *kriah* for

37. A woman who is meant to visit the *mikveh* on the night of *Tishah B'Av* 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.

38. Tehillim 19:9

the day, even the portion that he will only have to read later, at *Minchah* time.

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>39</sup> We will do so in *Moshiach*'s presence, with great joy, accompanied by a most extravagant feast of meat and wine.<sup>40</sup> Since *Moshiach* will surely be here before *Tishah B'Av*, this day will also be the greatest of *Yom 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>41</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>42</sup>, the Rebbe also talks all about the great advantage of learning the inner aspect of Torah (*Chassidus*) on *Tishah B'Av*.

The *Friediker* Rebbe relates<sup>43</sup> that he saw his father (the Rebbe Rashab) learning *Chassidus* on *Tishah B'Av*, but it seems like he was only skimming the text.

It is told in the name of *Reb Hillel of Paritch*,<sup>44</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.”

### The Rebbe Speaks

On Sunday, 10 Av, 5751 (a postponed fast), the Rebbe said a *sichah* before *Maariv*.<sup>45</sup>

“These restrictions on *Tishah B'Av*,” the Rebbe clarified the following year<sup>46</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 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>47</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

39. *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *erev Rosh Chodesh Menachem Av*, 5735

40. *Roshei Devarim* of the *sichah* of *Shabbos Parshas Matos-Maasei*, 5743

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

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

43. *Sefer Hasichos*, 5690 pg. 134

44. Quoted in *Nesiv Hachaim*.

45. 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...

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

47. *Sefer Hasichos* 5750, pg. 574 ff.

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 in Crown Heights. Traditionally, mourners would sit on the floor with a cushion or mat<sup>48</sup>. But 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, qualify.

A person who is ill or weak, an expectant or nursing mother (while she nurses) may sit on a regular-height chair. If traveling by car, you may also sit as normal. 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>49</sup> “On *Tishah B'Av*, when we sit on the ground, we can obtain everything we wish for from Hashem. For on this level, He too is found.”

### Melachah

We do not do *melachah* (involved work) until *chatzos* (1:02 pm in Crown Heights). 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 or lighting a fire, or knotting an item in one step, for example, are permitted. Writing is also allowed.<sup>50</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).

48. 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.

49. *Sefer Imrei Pinchas*

50. Can a professional writer or editor work? *Poskim* are divided on the matter. Practically, it is restricted.

### 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>51</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.)

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 *Tisha B'Av* should recite the blessing over the flame when reciting *havdalah*. However, they do not recite a blessing over spices.<sup>52</sup>

If you did not recite the blessing over a flame, you may do so any time during the night, but not once the night has passed.

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, do not repeat the Amidah. If, in addition to omitting *Atah chonantanu*, you also forgot that the fast had begun and ate or drank, you need to repeat the Amidah.

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 *Ramah* writes<sup>53</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.

During the reading of *Eichah* by the *chazzan*, with the congregation reading along quietly, he should pause between

51. 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.

52. See above, in the halachos concerning fasting, more details about *havdalah* for non-fasters.

53. In his *Sefer Gerushin*.



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.

### What the Sofer Thought

"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 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>54</sup>, it would seem that they have relented to *golus*, *chas v'shalom*. So here we are, forced to read Eichah from a Chumash..."

### Read It Again

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 Berdichev<sup>55</sup>: In the future, we will make a *brachah* of *Shehechyanu* when we read Megillas Eichah. We will read it slowly<sup>56</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 *minyan* should read Eichah and *Kinos* on their own.

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

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. 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>57</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.

## SUNDAY, TISHAH B'AV

**With the coming of Moshiach, immediately, we will**

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

55. *Kedushas Levi Hashalem*, vol. 2, new *likkutim* for *Tishah B'Av*, pg. 526

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

57. See below in tomorrow's halachos.

**celebrate today as a joyful Yom Tov.**

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 case of an unmarried *bachur* 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>58</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>59</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 laws of the seventeenth of Tammuz. The *chazzan* does not say *Birchas Kohanim* as part of his repetition.

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 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.

There is no *Mi shebeirach* said for those who receive an *aliyah*. If there is a bar mitzvah boy in the *minyan*, he should have 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 in Crown Heights). Throughout the *Kinos*, we sit low down, and say the *Kinos* in a

58. See more above, in the introductory *sichos* relating to the deeper meaning of *Tishah B'Av*.

59. For in the time of the second *Beis Hamikdash*, a *korban todah* was offered on *Tishah B'Av*.

mournful, wailing tone.<sup>60</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 above.) 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.

When *Kinos* is completed, we say *Ashrei* and *U'va l'Tziyon*—skipping over the *possuk* 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)

#### Kinos Two Ways

"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 Chayim* (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 despairs of the *geulah* arriving (before the next *Tishah B'Av*)."

The *Ruziner*, 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, connect book of *Eichah* to 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* 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>61</sup>: Although it is recommended, I have never seen the [Friediker] *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 [Friediker] *Rebbe* do this either. This may be because even viewing the *tziyon* from afar creates a connection and the [Friediker] *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.

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

61. *Igros Kodesh*, vol. 11, pg. 307

#### Minchah

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

"On fast days in Lubavitch, we'd daven *Minchah* late." the *Friediker 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>62</sup>

The *paroches* is returned to its rightful place before *Minchah*. The candles on 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*, can 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 *tefillin* 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 footnote.<sup>63</sup>

Then, before concluding the blessing of *Shema Koleinu*, *Aneinu* is recited by al (fasting congregants). If it is mistakenly omitted, see the halachos of the seventeenth of *Tammuz*.

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 *Haftorah* (*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*.

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>64</sup>

62. Ed. note: *Shki'ah* in Lubavitch at this time of year in Lubavitch is after nine o'clock.

63. If you said *Nachem*, but instead of the revised wording, you completed the *brachah* with *boneh Yerushalayim*, you are *yotzei*.

If you forgot *Nachem* altogether, and remembered after saying Hashem's name in the *brachah* at the conclusion of *boneh Yerushalayim*, say the paragraph of *Nachem* before saying *Vesechazeh* but do not recite the *brachah* (again) at the end.\*

If you remember after completing the *brachah* of *hamachazir Shchinaso l'Tziyon*, say the paragraph, sans *brachah*, before *V'al kulam*.

If you did not remember then either, your last opportunity to say *Nachem* is before the second *Yih'yu l'ratzon*. If you did not say it then, you do not say it at all (nor repeat the *Amidah*).

\*If you did repeat the *brachah* by mistake, it is fine. It is not considered a *brachah* in vain, nor is it a *hefsek* in your *davening*.

64. Do not use *maaser* money for this purpose.

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.

**Daily Shiurim:** The Rebbe instructs<sup>65</sup> not to push off *Chitas* until nighttime, despite other restrictions on learning. Regarding *Rambam*, as it states explicitly in the published schedule (*moreh shiur*): learn it 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."

"The Tzemach Tzedek called the Ruzhiner, 'the Holy Ruzhiner', it says in *Sefer Haminhagim*<sup>66</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>67</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, based on *Tehillim*<sup>68</sup>, that at the time of the storming of the *Heichal*, and a 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 (on the sins of *Yidden*) 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 **8:56 pm** (here in Crown Heights). 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 levana*, 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."

Recite *havdalah* after *Maariv*, but omit the blessings on spices and the flame. You may drink the wine.<sup>69</sup>

*Kiddush Levana* is recited after *havdalah*, with a *gartel* and a *siddur*.<sup>70</sup>

From a letter of *motzoei Tishah B'Av 5744*: It is a *minhag* to do *Kiddush Levana* 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. For *Yidden* and the *Shechina*, 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* time on *Tishah B'Av* (and in *Kiddush Levana*, we proclaim "Dovid, the king of *Yisroel*, is alive and enduring!)

If you forgot to recite *havdalah* before eating, recite it as soon as you remember—all through Tuesday. If you remember after washing for bread, but before reciting *hamotzi*, make *havdalah* immediately. However, if you made a *brachah* on your food, but before having tasted anything, eat one taste (even bread, or *mezonos* on cake) and then recite *havdalah*.

A man who has previously recited *havdalah* may not repeat it for the sake of a woman who has not heard *havdalah*.<sup>71</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*).

65. *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.

66. Laws of *Bein Hameitzarim*

67. *Roshei Devarim* of a *sichah* on *Shabbos Parshas Vayigash*, 5725

68. Chapter 79

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

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

71. Because of a differentiated level of obligation, as per the halachic sources.

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*.

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 peri 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 peri 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>72</sup>) until the next day at midday. We also keep the additional methods of mourning (such as laundering, haircutting, and listening to music). This is on account of the fire that broke out in the *Beis Hamikdash* on *Tishah B'Av* afternoon and smoldered until *chatzos* of the tenth of Av.<sup>73</sup>

Chatzos tomorrow is at 1:02 pm (in Crown Heights).

72. 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.

73. In addition to the other restrictions, it is preferable to refrain from marital relations also on *motzoei Tishah B'Av*. The exceptions are: if it is *mikveh* night, or if the spouse is traveling away the next day or has just returned from an out-of-town trip.

לזכות

ר' צבי מרדכי בן שרה  
וזוגתו מרת שלומית בת שושנה  
ובניהם ובנותיהם וכו'  
שיחיו גודמאן



ולזכות ר' יעקב יצחק דוב הלוי  
וזוגתו אסתר מלכה שיחיו

לאנג



לזכות

הבחור יוסף יצחק שיחי' בן חי' רחל ע"ה  
לרגל יום הולדתו ט' באב ל"שנת הצלחה"



לזכות

מנוחה רחל בת שרה פעסל  
לרגל יום הולדתה בט' מנחם-אב  
ל"שנת הצלחה"

לעילוי נשמת

המשפיע הרה"ח הרה"ת ר' פנחס בן הרב  
יהושע ע"ה קארף  
ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.



לזכות

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל זוגתו מרת  
מלכה שיחיו  
ובניהם אברהם, ארי' זאב שיחיו  
קאבאטשניק

להצלחה רבה ומופלגה בכל ולנחת יהודי  
חסידי מכל יוצאי חלציו שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת החוזר הרב יואל בן  
הרה"ח רפאל נחמן ז"ל הכהן כהן  
ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.



לעילוי נשמת

מרת חי' רחל ע"ה בת ר' יששכר  
דוב הלוי שיחי', נפטרה י"ג מנחם אב  
תשס"ח, ו"הקיצו ורגנו שוכני עפר" והיא  
בתום



לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת אברהם מיכאל בן  
ר' יעקב שמעון הלוי ע"ה פלינט



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