

LAWS OF TISHA B'AV

Tisha B'Av is a day of Jewish mourning. On this date infamous events took place, such as: the spies returned to Israel after a 40-day sojourn in Israel with an evil report of the land, the first and second "batei mikdash" were destroyed, Bar Kochba's revolt was crushed, Jews were expelled from Spain with the start of the Inquisition, World War I began. Because of these and other terrible events, we observe many restrictions as a sign of our own mourning. The restrictions begin at sunset on the ninth of Av, and continue until nightfall on the tenth of Av.

Washing – R'chitza

1. Washing parts of the body with hot or cold water is forbidden.
2. If parts of the body are soiled or dirty, it is permissible to clean the area, even with soap.
3. Upon awakening in the morning, and after using the bathroom, hands may be washed to the knuckles.
4. Washing for medicinal reasons is, of course, allowed.
5. Women do not go to the *mikvah* on Tisha B'Av.

Anointing – Sicha

1. It is forbidden to spread cosmetics and ointments on one's body.
2. Ointments for medicinal purposes are allowed.
3. Deodorants are allowed.

Torah Study

1. Learning Torah is forbidden.
2. Learning portions pertaining to the story of the destruction of the "bais hamikdash," or other Jewish calamities, is allowed.
3. The study of *Eicha*, parts of *Yirmeyahu*, Gitin 56-58, *Sanhedrin* 104, the third chapter of Moed Katan and the laws of mourning are permitted.

Marital Relations – Tashmish Ma'Mitah

1. Marital relations are forbidden. If Tisha B'Av falls on Shabbos, marital relations are forbidden unless it is the night of the wife's immersion in the *mikvah*.

Eating and Drinking – Achila Ushesiva

1. It is forbidden to eat or drink.
2. One who is sick, elderly, or weak is allowed to eat regular meals. A woman, within 30 days of childbirth who feels a need to eat, should eat. A woman within seven days of childbirth must eat.
3. A pregnant woman should consult with her doctor and rabbi.
4. Medications that need to be taken should be swallowed with a small amount of water (30 ml).

Footwear – Ne'ilas Ha'Sandal

1. Wearing leather shoes is forbidden.
2. Wearing leather shoes for medical reasons is permitted.

Other Prohibitions

- Do not greet friends with the traditional "hello" or "good morning." One should be careful not to offend someone who is not aware of this *halacha*.
- Do not sit on chairs until midday.
- One should try to avoid working on Tisha B'Av, or limit these activities.
- It is preferable to visit and console mourners after midday.
- *Tallis* and *Tefillin* are not worn at *shachrit*. They are donned for *mincha*, after midday, with their appropriate *b'rachot*.
- Do not prepare the evening meal until after midday.
- It is customary to wait until after Tisha B'Av to recite "kiddush le'vana."
- Do not listen to music, wash clothing, eat meat or drink wine until midday of the tenth of Av.
- It is praiseworthy to stay in shul and recite *kinnus* and participate in other activities relating to Tisha B'Av until midday.

WHEN TISHA B'AV FALLS ON SHABBOS OR SUNDAY

1. On Shabbos if one can occupy himself with torah topics pertaining to Tisha B'av he is praiseworthy. If not, all learning is permitted until sunset.
2. The custom is not to learn Pirkei Avot on this Shabbos.
3. The "seudah ha-mafsekes" is our "seudah shelishis". There are no restrictions. Wine and meat are allowed. Singing zeminos and learning torah are allowed. If one usually has company for seudah shelishis, it is permitted on this Shabbos.
4. Eating, drinking and washing are permitted only until sunset.
5. No preparations for Tisha B'av are made until Shabbos is over. Sneakers and kinnos cannot be brought to Shul until Shabbos is over.
6. If one is in Shul, one waits until after "barechu" and then kicks their leather shoes off. Some recite "baruch hamavdil bein kodesh le'chol", then kick their shoes off, before "barechu".
7. If one is at home when Shabbos is over, one recites "baruch ha'mavdil bein kodesh le'chol", changes from Shabbos shoes and clothing to non-leather shoes and everyday clothing, and then comes to Shul for Maariv.
8. "Ata chonantanu" is recited in Maariv. Women should remember to recite "baruch ha'mavdil" before any work is done.
9. After Maariv, before 'Eicha", a candle is lit and the "bracha, borei me'orei ha'eish" is recited by all.
10. Preferably women should also hear the bracha on the candle. If not they are allowed to make their own bracha but are not obligated to do so.
11. One who must break their fast on Sunday should recite Havdalah before they eat.
12. After the fast, one should not eat until Havdalah is recited.
13. Havdalah consists of the bracha "borei pri hagafen" and the bracha of "ha'mavdil".