

SUMMARY OF THE LAWS OF THE “THREE WEEKS”

The following is a summary of the laws of the Three Weeks.

This is intended as a general summary of Ashkenazi practice. Sephardi practice differs with much of what is listed below.

- Standard practice is for pregnant and nursing women to refrain from fasting on Shiva Asar B'Tammuz, but to fast on Tisha B'Av. Any woman with specific medical concerns in fasting should contact Rabbi Rosenbaum or Rabbi Postelnek.
- We refrain from getting married during this period.
- We refrain from listening to music and dancing during this period.
- We refrain from making the Beracha of Shehecheyanu during this period. Therefore, we refrain from purchases of special garments or wearing them for the first time.
- We refrain from haircuts during this period.
- This summary covers the period beginning Monday night, July 22 until Sunday night, August 4. The “Nine Days” have more stringent practices.

SUMMARY OF THE LAWS OF THE “NINE DAYS”

The following is based on the traditional Ashkenazi practice. Most Sephardim follow most of these halachot only during the week of Tisha B'Av.

1. Eating meat and drinking wine or grape juice is prohibited except on Shabbos and at a Seudas Mitzvah such as a Bris. This applies to adults and children and includes chicken as well as beef.
2. Havdalah may be said over wine or grape juice. If a child who is old enough to learn brachos but young enough to not understand the mourning of Tisha B'Av is available (we are likely discussing a child between the ages of 6 and 9), the child should drink the wine or grape juice. If no such child is available, the person making the havdalah should drink the wine or grape juice. See below for issues involving havdalah on or after Tisha B'av itself.
3. Laundering of clothes is prohibited. This includes preparation for after Tisha B'Av and includes giving clothes to a non-Jew for laundering. Similarly, one may not wear freshly laundered clothing. It is acceptable to wear freshly laundered undergarments, though the laundering must occur before the “Nine Days.” There are certain allowances for the laundering of young children’s clothing. Please contact Rabbi Rosenbaum or Rabbi Postelnek for further explanation.
4. Swimming and bathing for pleasure are prohibited.
5. Purchasing of major items is prohibited. One may not wear new articles of clothing.
6. Home improvements should not be made during this time.
7. These halachos are in effect as of Sunday night, August 4 through Wednesday, August 14 at 1:15 pm. This is intended as a general review. If you have questions about any of these restrictions (e.g. a sick person who needs to eat meat; home improvement projects that started before the 9 days, etc.) please contact Rabbi Rosenbaum or Rabbi Postelnek.

These restrictions are intended to help us feel the terrible loss of the destruction of the Temples during this period. May our mourning be a merit for the building of the third Temple, speedily in our days.