



## הלכות עשרה בטבת ביום ו'

Asara B'Teves Friday 25<sup>th</sup> December (Bank Holiday)

Asara B'Teves this year is unusual that it is on a Friday. The Taanis of Asara B'Teves should not be taken lightly as it is the only fast that can occur on a Friday and it is never postponed (משנ"ב סי' תק"נ סק"י). The reason why we fast on Asara B'Teves is because, it is the day when the wicked Babylonian king, Nevuchadnetzar, commenced his siege of Yerushalayim, foreshadowing the beginning of the end of the first Beis Hamikdosh, which culminated with its destruction on Tisha B'Av several years later.

**FAST BEGINS AND ENDS:** The fast begins Friday morning at 6:27am and must be observed until nightfall which is at 4:46pm, although Shabbos begins at 3:38pm and generally one should not enter Shabbos whilst hungry and distressed, on this occasion one must fast until 4:46pm (משנ"ב סי' רמ"ט סק"א).

**EATING BEFORE THE FAST:** If one wants to eat an early morning breakfast before 6:27am, they should have in mind the night before that they will eat before dawn.

**EXEMPT FROM FASTING:** Pregnant and nursing women and others with health issues may be exempt from fasting, please consult the Rov. Children under Bar / Bas Mitzvah are not required to fast.

**TEFILLAH:** At shacharis, Selichos and Aveinu Malkeinu is said followed by Leining. At Mincha there is Krias Hatorah with the Haftorah. Those fasting say 'Aneinu' during Shema Koilaynu. However Tachnun and Avinu Malkeinu are omitted (סי' רס"ז:א, משנ"ב סי' תר"ב סק"ג). Mincha should finish before the time of Shabbos.

**SHABBOS PREPERATIONS:** One may have a hot shower on Friday Asara B'Teves (משנ"ב סי' תק"נ סק"ו) and continue with all the normal preparations, such as haircuts and shaving (חוט שני ה"ל שבת ח"ד עמ' שפ"א).

**TASTING SHABBOS FOOD:** One who always tastes the Shabbos food on Erev Shabbos, may taste a small amount and spit out (משנ"ב סי' תקס"ז סק"ו).

**ZEMIRO:** If one is hungry or have family members and guests that are hungry, they may recite Kiddush immediately at nightfall and sing Shalom Aleichem and the other preliminary zemiros later in the meal.

**KIDDUSH ON CAKE:** If one's meal is delayed for whatever reason or women find it difficult to wait until their husband comes home, one may make Kiddush and have some cake at 4:46pm, this is considered Kiddush b'makom seuda (הגר"ח קניבסקי שליט"א).

**EARLY MINCHA:** When Asara B'Teves falls on a Friday, it is recommended to daven Mincha early i.e. Mincha Gedolah from 12.40pm, as this allows one to devote the rest of the afternoon for Shabbos preparations in the normal routine without rushing to Shul extra early which many are not accustomed to.

The last few times Asara B'teves fell on a Friday were in 1996, 2001, 2010 & 2013. Asara B'Teves will occur again on a Friday in 2023, 2024 and 2034.

The purpose of the fast is to focus on the spiritual side of the day and what it represents and use it as a catalyst for inspiration. Many have the minhag to give charity on a fast day (משנ"ב סי' תקס"ו סק"ב). In the merit of this fast, may we see the rebuilding of the third Beis Hamikdosh speedily in our days.