The fast of 17th of Tamuz

Today is the 16th of Tamuz, 5770

Tomorrow Tuesday June 29th is a fast day, *Shiva Asar beTamuz*. The fast begins at dawn and ends at 8.59 PM.

On the 17th of Tamuz there are only two prohibitions: eating and drinking. NO additional limitations apply, such as the prohibition of washing the body, wearing leather shoes, working, driving, etc.

Who is exempted from fasting?

Minors: boys under 13 and girls under 12 years old are completely exempted from fasting.

Nursing women: According to the Sephardic Minhag, after giving birth women are exempted from fasting for 24 months, even if they are not actually nursing their baby.

Pregnant women, especially after the first 3 months, are exempted from fasting.

A person who is sick, for example, flu or fever or one who has a chronic disease, for example, diabetes, is exempt from fasting.

Elders should consult with their physicians if the fast will not affect their health. If it will, they are exempted (and in some cases, prohibited) from fasting.

All other healthy people should fast and remember the tragedies that fell onto the Jewish people in this period.

Our custom is to authorize to wash one's mouth or brush the teeth in this Taanit, provided one will be very careful to lower his head as to avoid swallowing water unintentionally.

Tomorrow, B'H, I'll explain **why** we fast on this day.