From the 17th of Tamuz to the 9th of Ab

From the 17 of Tamuz (last July 6th) until the 9 of Ab (July 26/27) we observe some mourning customs and restrictions in remembrance of *ben hametzarim*, i.e., the three weeks period since the Babylonian army breached the walls of Yerushalayim until they burned and destroyed the Bet haMiqdash in 586 BCE. Besides the massive destruction and pillaging of the Holy city and Temple during those three weeks, hundreds of thousands of Jews were tortured, killed, or exiled.

These restrictions are not the same in every community. In the next lines, you will find some customs followed in the Mashadi community and most Sephardic communities.

SHEHECHEYANU for NEW FRUITS: Eating a new fruit that will require us to bless Shehecheyanu during the three weeks should be done only on Shabbat.

WEDDINGS: No weddings take place during the three weeks.

ENGAGEMENTS with no music are allowed until Rosh Chodesh Ab (July 19th).

CLOTHING: It is not customary to buy new clothing, except: 1. For a bride or groom that will get married after Tisha BeAb. 2. If the article will be substantially more expensive after Tisha BeAb. The Mashadi custom is to refrain from buying gold or any jewelry from Rosh Chodesh Ab.

HAIRCUT: Getting a haircut and shaving until Rosh Chodesh Ab is permitted. The Ashkenazi tradition is stricter in this sense, and their tradition is not to allow haircuts or shaving from the 17 of Tamuz until after the 9th of Ab. (Haircut restrictions do not apply to women).

NEW HOUSE: Buying, renting, or moving into a new house is permitted until Rosh Chodesh Ab.