TUTORIAL: When Tish’a BeAb Begins On A Saturday Night

This year, 2022, the fast of the Tish’a BeAb will begin on Saturday night, August 6, and end on Sunday night, August 7, at 8.35pm (some communities in NY, 8.25pm).

We have to transition from Shabbat, a festive day, to Tish’a beAb, a day of mourning.

In the following lines, we will explain how this transition is made.

SHABBAT MINCHA: The evening Shabbat prayer, Mincha, which normally takes place close to sunset, will be held earlier than usual this year. And the Se’uda Shelishit, the third Shabbat meal, which is usually in the Synagogue, will take place this year at home.

THE LAST MEAL: Normally, on the eve of Tish’a beAb, we have the Seudat haMafseqet, that is, the last meal before fasting. We sit on the ground as mourners, and we eat bread, lentils and unsalted eggs. But this year, since the eve of the fast is on Shabbat, we will not have a mourning meal. Shabbat’s Se’uda Shelishit is going to be the last meal before the fast. And it will be with no restrictions in terms of what we can eat or drink: we can have meat, wine, etc, or celebrate, singing, etc. The only limitation we will have this year is “time”: we have to finish eating our Seuda Shelishit before sunset, which in New York this year will be at 8.05pm (see the hours in your city of residence here).

TRANSITION TIME: As we have said, Se’uda Shelishit will be held privately at homes, and we will return to the Synagogue once Shabbat is over to pray Arbit of Tish’a beAb. Now, there will be “an interlude”, a pause between the end of Se’uda Shelishit and the beginning of Tish’a beAb. During that time, between 8.05pm (sunset) and 8.49pm (nightfall), it is still Shabbat, and therefore: we are still dressed for Shabbat, and

we cannot do anything in preparation for Tish'a beAb. But because we are going into Tisha BeAb, **we stop eating by 8.05pm**. . Technically speaking, we are not consciously "fasting" yet –it is forbidden to fast on Shabbat– but we stop the meal of our Seuda Shelishit. At 8.49pm we should say "Barukh haMabdil ben qodesh lechol" (= Blessed is He who established the difference between the holy and the profane) and then Shabbat is over for us, and Tisha BeAb formally begins.

THE BEGINNING OF MOURNING: After we say "Barukh haMabdil…", we change our leather shoes for non-leather footwear. This will be the first "act of mourning" in preparation for Tish'a beAb. Then we go to the synagogue. Synagogues will normally hold their Minyanim of Arbit later than usual, 15-20 minutes after Shabbat is over, so people have time to remove their Shabbat clothing, wear non-leather shoes and come from their homes to the Synagogue walking or by car.

HABDALA: On Saturday night we will NOT recite the full Habdala ceremony as we do in a regular Shabbat. In the Synagogue, we will say ATA CHONANTANU in the Amida prayer, and the blessing "Bore Meore haEsh" before reading Megillat Echa next to a candle. And only after the fast of Tisha beAb ends, on Sunday night after 8.35pm we will say the rest of Habdala ("Hagefen" and "haMabdil").

THE NIGHT OF TISHA BEAB IN THE SYNAGOGUE: We begin the prayers with a sad Psalm: 'al neharot babel (Tehilim 137), the psalm of the mourners for the destruction of the Bet haMiqdash. After Arbit we read Megillat Echa, the book of Lamentations written by the Prophet Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah). This book describes the destruction of the First Temple (586 BCE), the desolation of Yerushalayim, the pain of the Jews exiled to Babylon, the mockery of our enemies when they saw our misery, the impotence of the defeated Jews, the terrible starvation, diseases, epidemics and death. Then, we recite the qinot, a collection of very beautiful but sad poems that describe different tragedies that we suffer throughout our history. At the end of the qinot, sitting on the floor and with the lights off, we declare outlaid with sadness and tears: *"Listen, oh*

our brothers of the house of Israel… today we count… 1954 years since the destruction of our Bet haMiqdash”, and we ask HaShem for this to be the last year that we cry for the Bet haMiqdash.