

Halachos of Fasting

- There were four fasts instituted by the Rabanan in order to mourn the loss of the Beis Hamikdash
- They are: The seventeenth of Tammuz, The ninth of Av, Tzom Gedalia, The Tenth of Teves (Tannis Esther was instituted later for a different reason)
- The point of the fast is to do teshuva. Those that just waste the day away because they're fasting are defeating the purpose of the fast
- The fast starts at dawn (most say it's 72 minutes before sunrise)
- If you want to eat before dawn, it's preferable to have it in mind before you go to sleep. However if you didn't then you can still eat
- If you want to eat bread or an eggs worth of cake then you must begin eating at least a half hour before dawn
- Women can start eating the above even within a half hour of dawn
- If you feel uncomfortable, you're allowed to brush your teeth and use mouthwash but make sure not to swallow (keep your head down)
- Listerine strips are allowed if you're really uncomfortable
- Preferably no dental appointments unless necessary
- Showering, listening to music, and shaving/taking haircuts are allowed but not preferred
- Laundry can be done on a fast day
- Nails can be cut
- Medicines that don't taste good can be swallowed
- If liquids are necessary for the medications then they can be taken with less than an ounce of water
- If you ate or drank by mistake then you have to immediately stop and you can't eat any more
- If you realized that it's a fast day after you already made the Bracha, taste a small amount of the food so that it won't be a Bracha levatala
- Pregnant and nursing mothers don't have to fast
- Some say that any mother within 24 months of childbirth doesn't have to fast. Ask a Sheila
- If you feel sicker than on a normal fast & medicine hasn't/won't help or you feel faint, you can break the fast
- One who can't focus properly at work should ask a shaila about fasting
- Children under the age of bar/bas mitzva don't have to fast, not even for a few hours
- The fast end at nightfall which is preferably at fifty minutes after sunset and if necessary, 42 minutes after sunset
- Those that are traveling end the fast based on where they are at the end of the fast not where they were at the beginning of the fast

Davening

- Those that are fasting when davening Mincha should add the tefila of Aneinu during the bracha of Shomeya Tefila in Shmeona Esrei. If it was forgotten, don't repeat
- Those that aren't fasting should preferably not be the chazzan and not get an Aliya to the Torah
- Avinu Malkeinu is said at both Shacharis and Mincha
- One davening without a minyan should say Avinu Malkeinu
- Maariv should preferably be davened before breaking the fast. If one has a set place to daven maariv then they can be lenient to eat before maariv