

Parashas Mattos-Masei 5786 • July 11th • 26 Tamuz

Shabbos Mevorchim

This week is Shabbos Mevorchim Chodesh Menachem Av. Rosh Chodesh is Wednesday, July 15th. The *molad* is Tuesday evening at 7:30 PM and 17 *chalakim*.

Kiddush Levana may be recited as of Motzaei Shabbos Parashas Devarim-Chazon, July 18th. The prevalent *minhag* is to wait until Motza'ei Tishah B'Av to recite Kiddush Levana. The final opportunity is Tuesday, July 28th.

The Nine Days

The Nine Days begin on the evening of Rosh Chodesh Av, Tuesday evening, July 14th at *shekiya*. The restrictions of the Three Weeks remain in effect (see *Tidbits on Parashas Pinchas - The Three weeks*) in addition to the following restrictions:

Consuming Meat and Wine. Eating meat or chicken is prohibited. Wine is prohibited, but alcoholic beverages not from grapes are permitted. There are no restrictions on Shabbos or at a *Seudas Mitzvah*. There is room for leniency for health reasons. Children above the age of 3 should preferably not be fed meat unless the child refuses other foods. One who customarily uses wine for Havdalah may drink the wine. However, many have the *minhag* to give it to a boy who is a minor of chinuch age (6 or 7, but *preferably* a child who does not understand the concept of mourning). Some simply use beer instead.

Purchasing Clothing and Expensive Items. This prohibition includes all types of clothing. There is room for leniency for: newborns and young children; an uncommon sale; an item that will be unavailable after Tishah B'Av; exchanging an item for a similar item; and footwear for Tishah B'Av.

Fashioning & Alterations of New Garments\

Laundering and Dry Cleaning. There is room for leniency for: young children, spot

cleaning, laundering to prevent permanent stains, laundry needed for a *mitzvah*, picking up previously cleaned clothes from dry cleaners, rags used for cleaning, ironing Shabbos clothes and tablecloths.

Wearing New or Freshly Laundered Clothes and Linen. Before the Nine Days begin, one should briefly wear freshly laundered clothing and briefly use fresh towels or linen to remove their freshness. A newly arrived guest may use fresh linens. Freshly laundered clothes may be worn on Shabbos of the Nine Days. (Note that clothes which are worn on Shabbos, even briefly, lose their freshness and become suitable for wearing during the Nine Days. However, clothing which is not suitable for Shabbos may not be worn solely for the purpose of removing its freshness due to the prohibition of *hachanah*.)

Home Decorating and Moving

Swimming and Showering. Washing hands, face, and feet with cool water is permissible. The purpose of the prohibition is to feel some level of discomfort, and should not be regarded lightly. Nevertheless, one who feels very uncomfortable or is very sensitive may take a quick cool shower. Soap should be used only if necessary. There is a dispute among the Poskim if one may take a regular shower on Erev Shabbos Chazon (Parashas Devorim).

Wearing Shabbos Clothing on a Weekday. There may be room for leniency for select *baalei simchah*, such as in the case of a Bris, Pidyon Haben or Bar Mitzvah, as well as for a date or an engagement party. Brand new clothes, however, may not be worn.

Dangerous Activities. One should be extra careful not to engage in hazardous activities during this period as it is an inauspicious time.

Many Sefardim observe these restrictions only during the week in which Tishah B'Av falls out ("Shavua she'chal bo").

Reminders

The *haftarah* for Parashas Masei is read. This *haftarah* is the second in the series of the *Shalosh D'Puranusa* (the Three *Haftarahs* of Chastisement). See *Parasha in a Paragraph for further details*.

Pirkei Avos: Perek 1

Daf Yomi - Shabbos: Bavli: Chullin 72 • Yerushalmi: Chagigah 23 • Mishnah Yomis: Keilim 17:6-7 • Oraysa (coming week): Yevamos 81b-83b • Kitzur Shulchan Aruch: 183:4-184:5

Make sure to call your parents, in-laws, grandparents, and Rebbi to wish them a good Shabbos. If you didn't speak to your kids today, make sure to connect with them as well!

Next on the Calendar

Rosh Chodesh Av begins Tuesday night, July 14th and marks the beginning of the Nine Days.

Shabbos Chazon is next Shabbos, Parashas Devarim, July 18th.

Tisha B'av begins Wednesday night, July 22nd.

Shabbos Nachamu is in two weeks, Shabbos Parashas Chazon, July 25th.

Tu B'Av is on Wednesday, July 29th.

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Parshah in a Paragraph

MATTOS: The laws of vows • Attacking Midian to avenge their incitement to sin • Purifying the spoils of war • Laws of *Hagal* (*Kashering*) • Division of the spoils between *hekdes*, the soldiers and the nation • Bnei Gad and Bnei Reuven request to settle the land across the Jordan River • Moshe is angered at first • Moshe conditionally accepts their proposition, if they first assist the Nation conquer and settle the Land.

MASEI: The journeys and campings through the desert are listed • Instructions for conquering and occupying the land • The Land's borders • Yehoshua, Elazar and the Nesiim are named as leaders • Cities for the Leviim and the *Migrash* surrounding them • *Ir Miklat* • To keep the integrity of the tribes' initial borders, the Bnos Tzelafchad who receive ancestral land must marry within their tribe • *Chazak Chazak V'nis'chazeik!*

Haftarah: The *haftarah* for Parashas Masei is read. Yirmiyah (2:4-28, [3:4, 4:1-2]) chastises the nation for abandoning Hashem despite all the material good they were given and the spiritual opportunities He has provided.

613 Taryag Weekly

Mattos: 112 Pesukim • 1 Obligation • 1 Prohibition

1) Abide by the laws of vows and their annulment. 2) Do not violate a vow.

Masei: 132 Pesukim • 2 Obligations • 4 Prohibitions

1) Provide cities for the dwelling of Kohanim and Leviim in Eretz Yisrael. 2) Do not kill a murderer without a trial in Beis Din. 3) Exile an accidental killer. 4) A witness may only state his testimony, and not his legal opinion. 5-6) Do not substitute the punishment for a murderer or an accidental killer.

Mitzvah Highlight: The power of a *neder*

is to prohibit items as if they are holy like a *korban*. Thus, violating a *neder* is tantamount to stating that one does not believe in the holiness of *korbanos* (Sefer HaChinuch).

For the Shabbos Table

“כִּי הַדָּם הוּא יְחַנֵּף אֶת-הָאָרֶץ”

For the blood will bring guilt upon the land (Bamidbar 35:33)

In condemning acts of murder, the Torah describes it as *“chanifa”* - *flattering of the land*. In what sense is murder considered to be flattery?

Rav Moshe Feinstein zt'l explains that while murder is considered immoral by every nation, their reasoning differs from ours. They eschew murder for its negative impact on society; the drawback of this viewpoint is that at times society as a whole or even an individual can deem 'murder' as a "benefit to society," tolerating assisted suicide, failing to extend the lives of the elderly, taking cost concerns into account, etc. In the eyes of the Torah, however, the evil of murder comes from the inherent value and sanctity of Life. We violate almost any mitzvah to save the life of even a sick or elderly person, and even to extend life for moments. Thus, the Torah describes 'murder' as "flattering [the society of] the land," since it lends more importance to societal concerns than to the value of each moment of a Jew's life.

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**When you have
nothing smart to
say, say nothing.**

-Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz z'l

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