



Carnegie Shul Chatter

July 9, 2020



Light candles 8:33pm

Shabbat service 9:20am

The Three Weeks

Today, July 9, the 17th of Tammuz on the Jewish calendar, is not a good day in Jewish history. In fact, it is a day in which five calamitous events occurred, and it is marked by a fast for observant Jews. It also begins a period known as the Three Weeks that ends with another sad day in Jewish history, Tisha B'Av, the day on which the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed.

Below are two articles, one from The Jerusalem Post and the other from myjewishlearning.com, that explain the 17th of Tammuz.

History Forgotten

While the focus of much of the nation over the past several weeks has been on the Coronavirus pandemic and the protests following the killing of George Floyd, one of the stories that has barely scratched the surface of the national newscasts has been a disturbing rise in anti-Semitism, some of which has come from the Black Lives Matter movement and other protesters.

This week, DeSean Jackson, a star wide receiver with the Philadelphia Eagles, posted derogatory social media messages over the Fourth of July weekend, one of which had an image of a page out of a book that included anti-Semitic quotes that were falsely attributed to Hitler. One of the two Hitler quotes posted by Jackson Monday accused "white Jews" of having a "plan for world domination."

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17th of Tammuz

A minor fast day with major history.

By MJL

The 17th of the month of Tammuz is observed as a minor fast day, with eating and drinking forbidden from dawn until sundown. Like Tisha B'Av, which comes just three weeks later, the 17th of Tammuz (often called by its Hebrew name, Shiva Asar b'Tammuz) is said to commemorate not to just one calamitous event in Jewish history, but several tragedies of the Jewish people.

The Mishnah in Taanit 4:6 lists five events that occurred on the 17th of Tammuz: Moses broke the tablets of law he had been given on Mount Sinai, the priests in the First Temple stopped offering the Tamid (daily) sacrifice because Jerusalem was besieged and they ran out of sheep, the walls of Jerusalem were breached by the Romans in the Second Temple Period, a Roman general named Apostomos burned a Torah scroll, and an idol was erected in the Temple by the Romans.

The minor fast also begins a period of mourning that lasts through Tisha B'Av, the major fast day that commemorates, among other things, the destruction of both the First and the Second Temples. During this three-week period some people abstain from listening to music, getting married, and cutting their hair.

During the morning service on the 17th of Tammuz, a paragraph is added to the Amidah prayer, Avinu Malkeinu is recited, and there is a special Torah reading. During the afternoon service, all of the changes to the morning service are repeated, and Ashkenazim read a special Haftarah from the Book of Isaiah.

The post also said: "Hitler said, 'because the white Jews know that the Negroes are the real Children of Israel and to keep America's secret the Jews will blackmail America... The white citizens of America will be terrified to know that all this time they've been mistreating and discriminating and lynching the Children of Israel.'"

Both the Owner and the General Manager of the Eagles are Jewish.

Although Jackson later apologized for his posts, it is sad that some members of the Black community are including anti-Semitism with their grievances. It is sad that they forget how many Jews assisted the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s and how many Jewish Freedom Riders risked their lives helping to fight discrimination in the South.



Fast of the 17th of Tammuz: Times and customs

By Tzvi Joffre

July 8, 2020 14:32

Thursday marks the fast of the 17th of the Hebrew month of Tammuz, a day commemorating a number of tragedies in Jewish history and the start of a mourning period known as the Three Weeks, when many Jews traditionally follow some mourning customs.

Five tragedies are said to have occurred on the 17th of Tammuz: the breaking of the tablets of the Ten

Commandments by Moses, the cessation of the daily offering during the Babylonian siege of Jerusalem, the burning of the Torah by Apostomos, the placing of an idol in the Temple in Jerusalem and the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem by the Romans in 69 CE after a long siege. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, the Babylonians also breached the walls of Jerusalem on this day.

During the three weeks, many Jews begin following mourning customs, including avoiding haircuts and shaving, not listening to music and not getting married. Many also avoid risky or dangerous activities and traveling.

Additional restrictions are practiced starting from the first day of the Hebrew month of Av until the ninth day of the month, the fast of Tisha B'Av, commemorating the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, among other calamities. Eating meat and drinking wine and wearing freshly laundered or new clothes is prohibited. Joyous activities, such as bathing for pleasure and buying new items, are avoided or prohibited. One should consult their rabbi for any questions about Jewish laws and customs during this time.

The fast of the 17th of Tammuz, also known as Shivah Asar B'Tammuz, begins at dawn and ends at nightfall. One may wake up before the fast and eat, as long as one had mind to do so before going to sleep. Those who are ill, pregnant or nursing may not need to fast and should consult a rabbi.

Israel's Chief Rabbi David Lau ruled on Tuesday that those who test positive for the coronavirus or feel symptoms of the virus should not fast.

